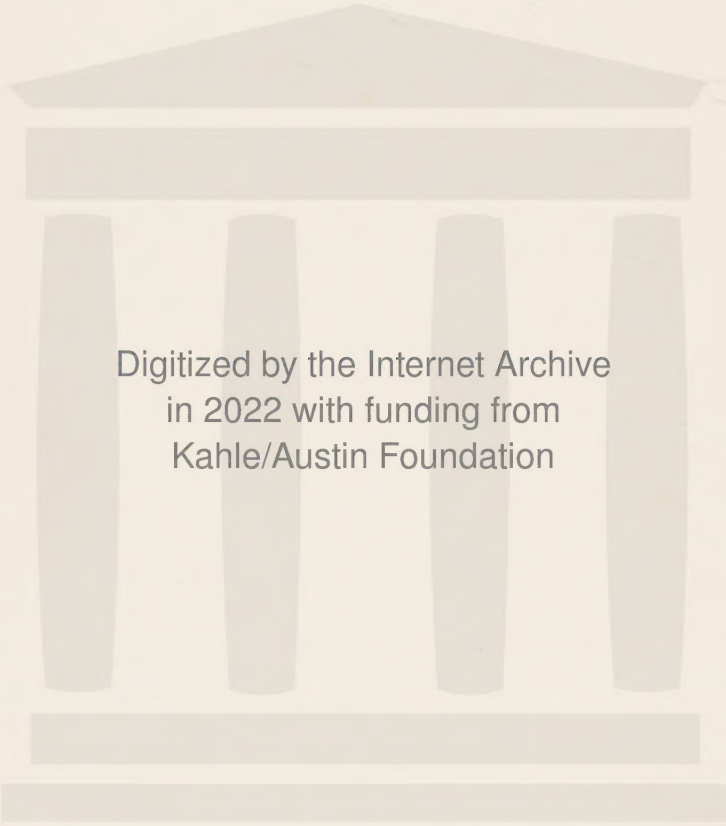


A Cavalcade of British Writing



GUNNAR HORN



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A
CAVALCADE
OF
BRITISH WRITING



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OF BRITISH WRITING

Gunnar Horn

Head of the English Department
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Dedicated to My Colleagues

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Preface

All of us who read the English language are the beneficiaries of twelve centuries of British poetry and prose. It is literally true that the sun never sets on students of English literature. Independent as it may be today, American literature flows in a direct descent from *Beowulf*, Chaucer, Milton, and Wordsworth.

Emphasis in *A Cavalcade of British Writing*, as in the other volumes in the series, is on providing the students with an introduction to our cultural heritage: the experiences, thoughts, emotions, and moral judgments that we have inherited with our language. A glance at the contents reveals the wealth and variety of selections gathered from the best and most interesting writing from every period. The quality of the selections has been kept high. *Macbeth* and Hardy's *Under the Greenwood Tree* are included in their entirety.

The book is arranged both by types and chronology, making it possible to concentrate on a type long enough to achieve reasonable mastery of it, and at the same time retain a sense of continuity between past and present. The arrangement by type helps the student to learn the basic forms of literature more readily. Each unit, such as "The Essay" or "Poetry," is preceded by an Introduction which discusses the particular form both technically and historically, and makes the student aware of the writers: what they try to achieve and how they go about it. Literary terms are defined; poetic devices and figures of speech are described.

Throughout the text, footnotes explain obscure references. A glossary defines difficult words and gives the correct pronunciation for each one and for proper names; a complete index provides a handy reference tool. A workbook and a teacher's manual accompany each text.

Carefully researched biographies cast significant light on the lives of the writers, emphasizing those experiences and views which form backgrounds to the selections in the anthology. The biographies show the relation of the individual selections to the writer's complete works and to his contribution to our culture.

As teachers well know, reading is not a single skill but a combination of many skills. The arrangement by literary type facilitates the teaching of these different skills. Reading a short story, for instance, requires a technique that is different from interpreting a poem, or understanding a play or a novel. In each case there is enough material of like nature to enable the student to develop the necessary reading skills.

The discussion questions which follow each selection take into consideration the various levels at which a selection can be enjoyed and appreciated. They are the distillation of years of teaching and will bring about fruitful discussion. The abundance of research projects enables students to work up to capacity, regardless of their abilities. The exploration of library resources is encouraged in these projects.

The illustrations in *A Cavalcade of British Writing* are unique in both variety and purpose. As in the other books in the series, the illustrations in this volume "interpret" the writing; that is, they help the reader to insights that he might otherwise miss. In addition to the original work of seventeen contemporary artists, this volume contains reproductions of great works of art of the past, many of them in full color and large enough to preserve the detail of the originals. Thus a course in literary appreciation becomes also a course in art appreciation. Both the author and the editors believe that seniors in high school can readily grasp the point that art and literature are facets of the same culture. Many teachers of literature have sought to make this correlation, and it is to make their efforts less burdensome and to encourage others to follow suit that examples of great art have been used at appropriate places in the text. With a little guidance from the teacher, students can happily be led to see that a story may be told in prose, or in poetry, or in a tapestry; that the spirit of a peasant dance can be conveyed with equal effectiveness by the pen of a Thomas Hardy or the paint brush of a Pieter Bruegel; that Picasso's *Guernica* carries the same message as "Æs Triplex."

A debt is owed to generations of students who have helped to make this anthology, and it would be remiss not to acknowledge the help of my colleagues, especially Miss Alice Horsfall, librarian at Benson High School, who has been most helpful in solving research problems.

It is my hope that *A Cavalcade of British Writing* will make students stretch intellectually. The selections have been chosen with this expectation in mind. That does not mean the readings are "difficult." Our heritage of British writing is so vast and varied that the problem of the teacher is not one of finding material, but rather one of weeding out all but the most interesting and rewarding selections.

All the elements of this anthology have been designed with the aim of presenting a whole that is rich in enjoyment and learning. Through the carefully selected writings and the numerous teaching aids, students will better understand the enjoyment of reading and become more aware of their literary heritage.

GUNNAR HORN



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PROSE NARRATIVES



Telling stories, true or imaginative, has, in all cultures, been one of the earliest kinds of entertainment. Drawing a parallel from primitive tribes living today, we can reasonably assume that storytelling was popular long before written languages came into existence. With dawning civilization came a desire to preserve stories more accurately than oral tradition had made possible. Archeologists have unearthed clay tablets with accounts of the deeds of heroes and villains of thousands of years ago. One of the oldest manuscripts yet found is the *Tales of the Magicians*, set down in Egypt five thousand years ago.

Two thousand years later, we find the classic Greek epics of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Long narrative poems, they are made up of many (often loosely connected) incidents that are in content short stories. A prose forerunner of the short story, the fable, also had its origin in Greece. A slave named Aesop supposedly invented and told the stories we still associate with his name. Aesop's fables were circulated orally before a later generation of Greeks had the good judgment to write them down.

The ancient Jews were storytellers, too, and many of their stories were incorporated into their great book, the Bible. The books of Esther and Ruth and the account of Joseph and his brothers in the Old Testament are brief but complete stories. When the New Testament was compiled, it introduced a special type of story, the parable. The stories of the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son are well-known examples of this type.

The Middle Ages saw the minstrel rise to popularity. He was a profes-

sional storyteller who sang or recited long narratives of courageous knights and courtly lovers. Perhaps because rhyme and rhythm made the stories easier to remember and repeat, many of them were told in verse form. The ballads were a later development along the same lines.

Many of the stories the minstrels sang centered about a legendary king of Britain named Arthur. Others told about the search for the Holy Grail, the mysteriously vanished cup from which Christ drank wine at the Last Supper. By the middle of the fifteenth century this legendary material had accumulated in enormous quantities in Western Europe. One of those who sought to bring order to this raw material of literature was Sir Thomas Malory. Drawing mainly upon French sources, Malory brought the Arthurian legends into the main stream of English literature with his admirably organized and vividly narrated *Morte d'Arthur*.

The period between the medieval and modern worlds, the Renaissance, began in England near the end of the fifteenth century. The first important writer of prose fiction in this period was Sir Thomas More. His contribution was a long essay in narrative form which he called *Utopia* ("Nowhere"). *Utopia* pretends to be the story of a sailor who returns to England after a long absence and comments on the evils he finds. Then he describes a country he has visited, Utopia, where wisdom and tolerance guide the lives of men and poverty has been abolished. The title of the book has given a name to a whole class of later fiction.

Two pieces of prose fiction that were popular in their own time and influential on later prose were John Lyly's

Euphues and Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*. Lyly's *Euphues* was published in 1579. Its plot was the popular medieval one of two men in love with the same girl. Lyly, however, departed drastically from tradition by letting his hero, *Euphues*, displace his friend in the girl's affections. The girl, also contrary to courtly tradition, rejects both suitors and accepts a third. Its plot gives *Euphues* some claim to being the first English novel. Lyly's extravagantly elaborate literary style—an attempt to give artistic value to prose by using the techniques of poetry—gave the word *euphuism* to the English language. On the credit side, it gave English prose a greater polish than it had hitherto known.

Sidney's contribution to prose narration was the pastoral romance *Arcadia*, written in 1580, though not published until 1590, to amuse his sister, the Countess of Pembroke. The prose tale is interrupted from time to time by passages in verse. In style *Arcadia* is as euphuistic as anything Lyly wrote.

With these exceptions England produced little important narrative prose during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Perhaps the cause was the popularity of drama, which attracted to the theater writers who might otherwise have turned their talents to prose fiction.

In the middle of the seventeenth century appeared John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, which was not only a great religious allegory but a vivid and realistic picture of life in Bunyan's day. In its homely details and simple, everyday language, *Pilgrim's Progress* exerted a powerful influence on later English prose. It also established an important principle of fictional style, as Samuel

Taylor Coleridge later pointed out. Commenting on *Pilgrim's Progress*, Coleridge said, "If you were to polish it, you would at once destroy the reality of the vision. For works of imagination should be written in very plain language, the more purely imaginative they are the more necessary it is to be plain."

Early in the eighteenth century Daniel Defoe brought to prose fiction a high degree of verisimilitude. Indeed, for many years his *Journal of the Plague Year* was taken for fact rather than the highly skillful invention that it is.

Jonathan Swift's contribution to prose fiction was a powerful imagination. Not content to reproduce real life, he invented new worlds of his own and supplied them with all the appearances of real life. *Gulliver's Travels*, although a book of considerable length, is actually a group of short stories, each of which is an account of a different adventure.

The latter part of the eighteenth century saw the development and rise to major importance of the novel. Long prose fiction thus achieved literary stature before the short form did.

Although the lines of demarcation in literature are frequently hazy, it is clear that when we come to Charles Dickens' *Pickwick Papers*, we are on a borderline of some sort. Too episodic to qualify as a novel, the individual papers come close to being short stories. They aren't quite, though. They lack that tight plot and unity of impression which ever since Poe have been considered identifying characteristics of the true short story. After *Pickwick Papers* Dickens went on to become a novelist, so credit for the creation of the English short story fell to the hands of a later writer, Robert Louis Stevenson.



IT WAS only as recently as 1894 that the identity of the author of *Le Morte d'Arthur* was tracked down by an American professor, George L. Kittredge. After much research, Kittredge found a Thomas Malory whose life fitted the few clues left by the author.

The date of Malory's birth is uncertain. He was born in Warwickshire and was knighted as a young man. He served in France under the Earl of Warwick, a romantic idealist of the type Malory later glorified in his stories of King Arthur and his knights. Malory became a member of Parliament in 1445. Six years later, during the period of unrest and rebellion which preceded the Wars of the Roses, he raided a monastery located on land which had formerly belonged to his family. Malory was captured and spent most of the last twenty years of his life in Newgate Gaol in London. It was here he wrote *Le Morte d'Arthur*. For his research he depended upon manuscripts which he borrowed from the library of the nearby Grey Friars monastery. His own manuscript was apparently completed in 1470. At his death in 1471 Malory was buried in the monastery.

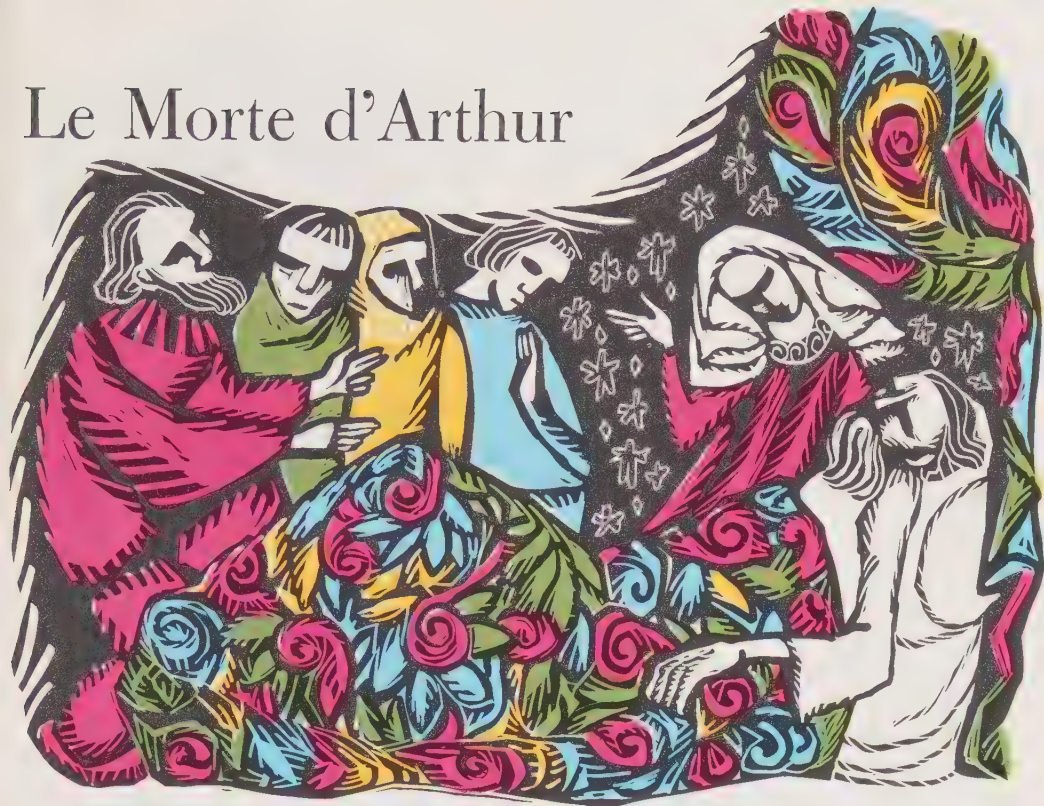
Le Morte d'Arthur marks the end of the Middle Ages and is the first important prose narrative written in modern English. The King Arthur stories originated for the most part in Wales, where a legendary king named Arthur ruled in the sixth century. Malory's contribution to English literature was the collection and organization of the scattered stories into a structural unit. With his dignified, even stately, language, Malory also did much to elevate the style of English narrative prose.

Malory's manuscript was published in 1485 by William Caxton, the first English printer. Malory had called his work *The Book of King Arthur and His Knights of the Round Table*. For reasons unknown today Caxton called the book *Le Morte d'Arthur*, a rather misleading title, as the narrative is in English, not French; and as it covers the whole life of Arthur, not just his death.

Caxton chose to set his books in the Midland dialect, the one most commonly in use in London, thus giving it the prestige and permanence of print which made it the basis of present-day English. Spelling was still a matter of individual preference in Caxton's day, and we owe many of the peculiarities of present-day English spelling to his decisions. Modern readers may find themselves slowed down by the lack of quotation marks, a device not invented until the following century.

SIR THOMAS MALORY 1394?–1471

Le Morte d'Arthur



How Arthur Was Chosen King

AND then [King Uther] fell passing sore sick, so that three days and three nights he was speechless: wherefore all the barons made great sorrow, and asked Merlin¹ what counsel were best. There is none other remedy, said Merlin, but God will have his will. But look ye all barons be before King Uther to-morn, and God and I shall make him to speak. So on the morn all the barons with Merlin came before the king; then Merlin said aloud unto King Uther, Sir, shall your son Arthur be king after your days, of this

realm with all the appurtenance? Then Uther Pendragon turned him, and said in hearing of them all, I give him God's blessing and mine, and bid him pray for my soul, and righteously and worshipfully that he claim the crown, upon forfeiture of my blessing; and therewith he yielded up the ghost, and then was he interred as longed to a king. Wherefore the queen, fair Igraine, made great sorrow, and all the barons.

Then stood the realm in great jeopardy long while, for every lord that was mighty of men made him strong, and many weened to have been king. Then Merlin went to

¹Merlin. Merlin was a magician and Arthur's chief adviser.

the Archbishop of Canterbury, and counseled him for to send for all the lords of the realm, and all the gentlemen of arms, that they should to London come by Christmas, upon pain of cursing; and for this cause, that Jesus, that was born on that night, that he would of his great mercy show some miracle, as he was come to be king of mankind, for to show some miracle who should be rightwise king of this realm. So the Archbishop, by the advice of Merlin, sent for all the lords and gentlemen of arms that they should come by Christmas even unto London. And many of them made them clean of their life, that their prayer might be the more acceptable unto God.

So in the greatest church of London, whether it were Paul's² or not the French book³ maketh no mention, all the estates⁴ were long ere day in the church for to pray. And when matins and the first mass was done, there was seen in the churchyard, against the high altar, a great stone four square, like unto a marble stone, and in midst thereof was like an anvil of steel a foot on high, and therein stuck a fair sword, naked, by the point, and letters there were written in gold about the sword that said thus:—Whoso pulleth out this sword of this stone and anvil, is rightwise king born of all England. Then the people marveled, and told it to the Archbishop. I command, said the Archbishop, that ye keep you within your church, and pray unto God still; that no man touch



the sword till the High Mass be all done. So when all masses were done all the lords went to behold the stone and the sword. And when they saw the scripture, some assayed; such as would have been king. But none might stir the sword nor move it. He is not here, said the Archbishop, that shall achieve the sword, but doubt not God will make him known. But this is my counsel, said the Archbishop, that we let purvey ten knights, men of good fame, and they

²*Paul's*. The first church on the site of the present St. Paul's Cathedral was built in 607. When it burned in 1086, it was replaced by the church which Malory knew. That church burned in 1666 (see *Pepys' Diary*, page 146) and was replaced by the present structure.

³*the French book*. One of Malory's sources was a rhymed history of England written by the French poet Wace.

⁴*all the estates*. People were then thought of as falling into one of three classes: the clergy, the nobility, and the common people. Edmund Burke later called the press the Fourth Estate.

to keep this sword. So it was ordained, and then there was made a cry, that every man should assay that would, for to win the sword.

And upon New Year's Day the barons let make a jousts and a tournament, that all knights that would joust or tourney there might play, and all this was ordained for to keep the lords together and the commons, for the Archbishop trusted that God would make him known that should win the sword. So upon New Year's Day, when the service was done, the barons rode unto the field, some to joust and some to tourney, and so it happened that Sir Ector, that had great livelihood about London, rode unto the jousts, and with him rode Sir Kay his son, and young Arthur that was his nourished⁵ brother; and Sir Kay was made knight at All Hal-lowmass afore.

So as they rode to the jousts-ward, Sir Kay lost his sword, for he had left it at his father's lodging, and so he prayed young Arthur for to ride for his sword. I will well, said Arthur, and rode fast after the sword, and when he came home, the lady and all were out to see the jousting. Then was Arthur wroth, and said to himself, I will ride to the churchyard, and take the sword with me that sticketh in the stone, for my brother Sir Kay shall not be without a sword this day. So when he came to the churchyard, Sir Arthur alit and tied his horse to the stile, and

so he went to the tent, and found no knights there, for they were at the jousting; and so he handled the sword by the handles, and lightly and fiercely pulled it out of the stone, and took his horse and rode his way until he came to his brother Sir Kay, and delivered him the sword.

And as soon as Sir Kay saw the sword, he wist well it was the sword of the stone, and so he rode to his father Sir Ector, and said: Sir, lo here is the sword of the stone, wherefore I must be king of this land. When Sir Ector beheld the sword, he returned again and came to the church, and there they alit all three, and went into the church. And anon he made Sir Kay to swear upon a book how he came to that sword. Sir, said Sir Kay, by my brother Arthur, for he brought it to me. How gat ye this sword? said Sir Ector to Arthur. Sir, I will tell you. When I came home for my brother's sword, I found nobody at home to deliver me his sword, and so I thought my brother Sir Kay should not be swordless, and so I came hither eagerly and pulled it out of the stone without any pain. Found ye any knights about this sword? said Sir Ector. Nay, said Arthur. Now, said Sir Ector to Arthur, I understand ye must be king of this land. Wherefore I, said Arthur, and for what cause? Sir, said Ector, for God will have it so, for there should never man have drawn out this sword, but he that shall be rightwise king of

⁵nourished. Foster.

this land. Now let me see whether ye can put the sword there as it was, and pull it out again. That is no mastery, said Arthur, and so he put it in the stone, wherewithal Sir Ector assayed to pull out the sword and failed. Now assay, said Sir Ector unto Sir Kay. And anon he pulled at the sword with all his might, but it would not be.

Now shall ye assay, said Sir Ector to Arthur. I will well, said Arthur, and pulled it out easily. And therewithal Sir Ector knelt down to the earth, and Sir Kay. Alas, said Arthur, my own dear father and brother, why kneel ye to me? Nay, nay, my lord Arthur, it is not so; I was never your father nor of your blood, but I wot well ye are of an higher blood than I weened ye were. And then Sir Ector told him all, how he was betaken him for to nourish him, and by whose commandment, and by Merlin's deliverance. Then Arthur made great dole when he understood that Sir Ector was not his father. Sir, said Ector unto Arthur, will ye be my good and gracious lord when ye are king? Else were I to blame, said Arthur, for ye are the man in the world that I am most beholden to, and my good lady and mother your wife, that as well as her own hath fostered me and kept. And if ever it be God's will that I be king as ye say, ye shall desire of me what I may do, and I shall not fail you, God forbid I should fail you. Sir, said Sir Ector, I will ask no more of you, but that ye will make my



son, your foster brother, Sir Kay, seneschal of all your lands. That shall be done, said Arthur, and more, by the faith of my body, that never man shall have that office but he, while he and I live.

Therewithal they went unto the Archbishop, and told him how the sword was achieved, and by whom; and on Twelfth-day all the barons came thither, and to assay to take the sword, who that would assay. But there afore them all, there might none take it out but Arthur; wherefore there were many lords wroth, and said it was a great shame unto them all and the realm, to be over governed with a boy of no high blood born, and so they fell out at that time that it was put off till Candlemas, and then all the barons should meet there again; but always the ten knights were ordained to watch the sword day and night, and so they set a pavilion over the stone and the sword, and five always watched.



So at Candlemas many more great lords came thither for to have won the sword, but there might none prevail. And right as Arthur did at Christmas, he did at Candlemas, and pulled out the sword easily, whereof the barons were sore aggrieved and put it off in delay till the high feast of Easter. And as Arthur sped before, so did he at Easter, yet there were some of the great lords had indignation that Arthur should be king, and put it off in a delay till the feast of Pentecost. Then the Archbishop of Canterbury by Merlin's providence let purvey then of the best knights that they might get, and such knights as Uther Pendragon loved best and most trusted in his days. And such knights were put

about Arthur as Sir Baudwin of Britain, Sir Kay, Sir Ulfius, Sir Brastias. All these with many other were always about Arthur, day and night, till the feast of Pentecost.

And at the feast of Pentecost all manner of men assayed to pull at the sword that would assay, but none might prevail but Arthur, and pulled it out afore all the lords and commons that were there, wherefore all the commons cried at once, We will have Arthur unto our king, we will put him no more in delay, for we all see that it is God's will that he shall be our king, and who that holdeth against it, we will slay him. And therewith all they kneeled at once, both rich and poor, and cried Arthur mercy because they had delayed him so long, and Arthur for-



gave them, and took the sword between both his hands, and offered it upon the altar, where the Archbishop was, and so was he made knight of the best man⁶ that was there. And so anon was the coronation made. And there was he sworn

unto his lords and the commons for to be a true king, to stand with true justice from thenceforth the days of this life. . . .

⁶*of the best man.* By the best man: the Archbishop.

Discussion

1. What special problem of monarchies is illustrated by this story?
2. What sort of person is Arthur? Support your characterization with incidents from the story.
3. Mention ways in which Christianity and chivalry are interwoven.
4. What do you think is symbolized by the drawing of the sword from the rock?
5. Why do you think English people cherish stories such as this?

Research

1. If you want to know more about Arthur, there are a number of readable modernized versions of *Le Morte d'Arthur*. You might, for instance, find out and report to your classmates how Arthur got his sword "Excalibur."
2. The most popular of all the versions of the Arthurian stories is Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*. This would be a good time to read one of the *Idylls*, perhaps "The Coming of Arthur."
3. Merlin figures rather briefly in this incident. If you like poetry, you might read Edwin Arlington Robinson's poem *Merlin*. Summarize the poem for your classmates and read aloud brief passages.
4. You would find it an educational experience to rewrite the story in modern English. Such an effort will reveal some of the changes that have taken place in our language. What are they? List as many as you can discover.
5. If satire appeals to you, you will find amusement in Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. Select an incident or two to share with your classmates.

JOHAN BUNYAN was born in the village of Elstow, near Bedford, where his father made a meager living for his family mending pots and pans. Little is known of Bunyan's youth except that he learned his father's trade and enjoyed taking part in village games. At sixteen he was drafted into the Puritan army under Cromwell. When he married at twenty, his wife brought with her two religious books which profoundly affected Bunyan.

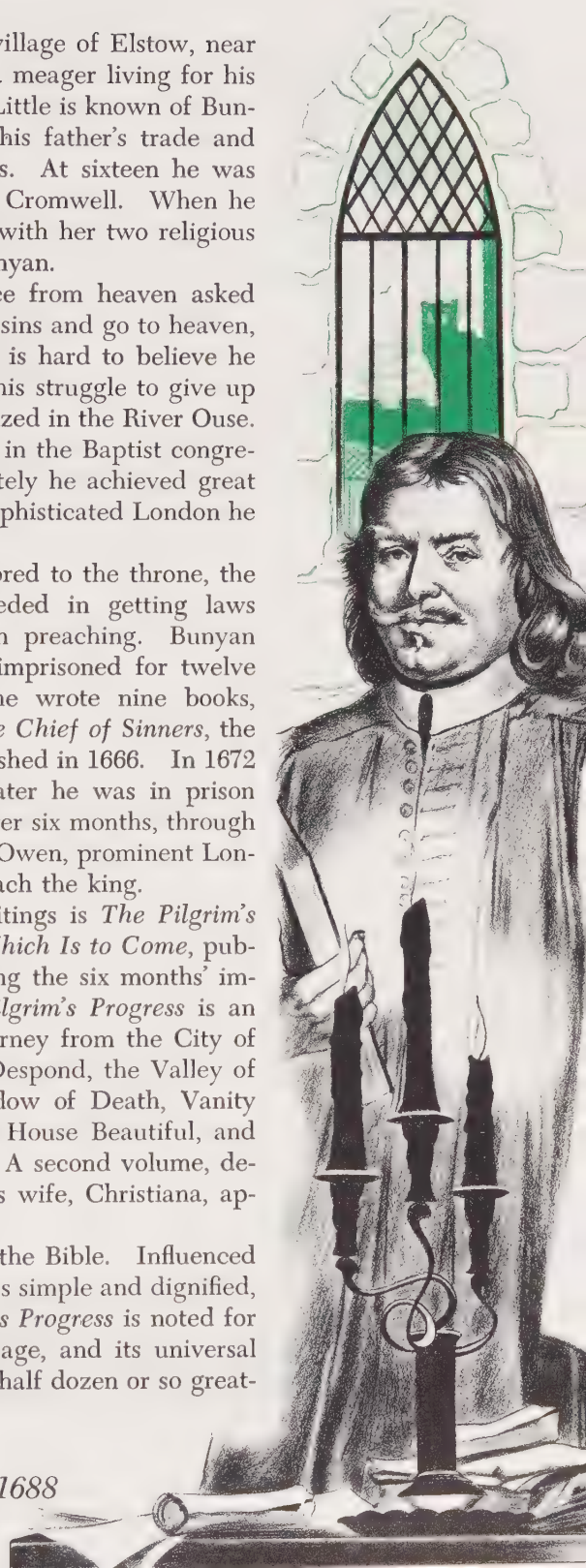
As he told the story later, a voice from heaven asked Bunyan whether "he would leave his sins and go to heaven, or keep his sins and go to hell." It is hard to believe he had many sins, though he mentions his struggle to give up swearing. In 1653 Bunyan was baptized in the River Ouse. Two years later he became a deacon in the Baptist congregation in Bedford. Almost immediately he achieved great popularity as a preacher. Even in sophisticated London he was listened to with respect.

In 1660 when Charles II was restored to the throne, the Episcopal, or State Church, succeeded in getting laws passed barring non-conformists from preaching. Bunyan refused to obey the laws and was imprisoned for twelve years. During his imprisonment he wrote nine books, among them *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, the story of his conversion. It was published in 1666. In 1672 Bunyan was released, but a year later he was in prison again. This time he was released after six months, through the efforts of Bishop Barlow and Dr. Owen, prominent London clergymen, who were able to reach the king.

The most famous of Bunyan's writings is *The Pilgrim's Progress from This World to That Which Is to Come*, published in 1678. It was written during the six months' imprisonment in Bedford jail. *The Pilgrim's Progress* is an allegorical account of Christian's journey from the City of Destruction through the Slough of Despond, the Valley of Humiliation, the Valley of the Shadow of Death, Vanity Fair, the Delectable Mountains, the House Beautiful, and Beulah Land, to the Celestial City. A second volume, describing the pilgrimage of Christian's wife, Christiana, appeared in 1684.

Bunyan knew no literature except the Bible. Influenced by the King James' Version, his style is simple and dignified, concrete and vigorous. *The Pilgrim's Progress* is noted for its sincerity, the beauty of its language, and its universal applicability. It ranks as one of the half dozen or so greatest books in the English language.

JOHN BUNYAN 1628-1688



The Pilgrim's Progress

Christian Flees

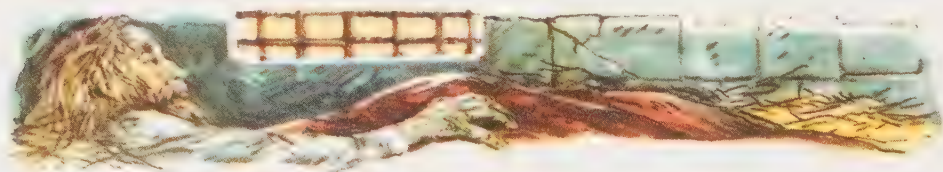
AS I walked through the wilderness of this world, I lighted on a certain place where was a den,¹ and I laid me down in that place to sleep; and as I slept, I dreamed a dream. I dreamed, and behold I saw a man clothed with rags, standing in a certain place, with his face from his own house, a Book in his hand, and a great burden upon his back. I looked, and saw him open the Book, and read therein; and as he read, he wept and trembled; and not being able longer to contain, he brake out with a lamentable cry, saying, "What shall I do?"

In this plight therefore he went home, and refrained himself as long as he could, that his wife and children should not perceive his distress; but he could not be silent long, because that his trouble increased. Wherefore at length he brake his mind to his wife and children; and thus he began to talk to them: "O my dear wife," said he, "and you the children of my bowels, I, your dear friend, am in myself undone by reason of a burden that lieth hard

upon me; moreover, I am for certain informed that this our city will be burned with fire from heaven; in which fearful overthrow, both myself, with thee my wife, and you my sweet babes, shall miserably come to ruin, except (the which yet I see not) some way of escape can be found whereby we may be delivered."

At this his relations were sore amazed; not for that they believed that what he had said to them was true, but because they thought that

¹*a den.* Bedford jail, where Bunyan wrote *The Pilgrim's Progress*.





some frenzy distemper had got into his head; therefore, it drawing toward night, and they hoping that sleep might settle his brains, with all haste they got him to bed. But the night was as troublesome to him as the day; wherefore, instead of sleeping, he spent it in sighs and tears.

So, when the morning was come, they would know how he did; he told them, "Worse and worse." He also set to talking to them again, but they began to be hardened. They also thought to drive away his distemper by harsh and surly carriages to him; sometimes they would deride, sometimes they would chide,

and sometimes they would quite neglect him. Wherefore he began to retire himself to his chamber, to pray for and pity them, and also to condole his own misery; he would also walk solitarily in the fields, sometimes reading, and sometimes praying. And thus for some days he spent his time.

Now, I saw upon a time, when he was walking in the fields, that he was, as he was wont, reading in his Book, and greatly distressed in his mind; and as he read, he burst out, as he had done before, crying, "What shall I do to be saved?"

I saw also that he looked this way and that way, as if he would run; yet he stood still, because, as I perceived, he could not tell which way to go. I looked then and saw a man named Evangelist, coming to him, and asked, "Wherefore dost thou cry?"

He answered, "Sir, I perceive by the Book in my hand that I am condemned to die, and after that to come to judgment, and I find that I am not willing to do the first, nor able to do the second."

Then said Evangelist, "Why not willing to die, since this life is attended with so many evils?"

The man answered, "Because I fear that this burden that is upon my back will sink me lower than the grave, and I shall fall into Tophet.² And, sir, if I be not fit to go to prison, I am not fit (I am sure) to go to judgment, and from thence to execution; and the thoughts of these things make me cry."

Then said Evangelist, "If this be thy condition, why standest thou still?"

He answered, "Because I know not whither to go."

Then he gave him a parchment-roll, and there was written within, *Fly from the wrath to come.*

The man therefore read it, and, looking upon Evangelist very carefully, said, "Whither must I fly?"

Then said Evangelist, pointing with his finger over a very wide field, "Do you see yonder wicket-gate?"

The man said, "No."

Then said the other, "Do you see yonder shining light?"

He said, "I think I do."

Then said Evangelist, "Keep that light in your eye, and go up directly thereto: so shalt thou see the gate; at which, when thou knockest, it shall be told thee what thou shalt do."

So I saw in my dream that the man began to run. Now he had not run far from his own door, but his wife and children, perceiving it, began to cry after him to return; but the man put his fingers in his ears, and ran on, crying, "Life! Life! Eternal Life!" So he looked not behind him, but fled toward the middle of the plain.

[On his flight Christian is joined by Faithful. The two pilgrims meet and overcome many difficulties in the Wilderness of Dejection.]

Vanity Fair

Then I saw in my dream that when they were got out of the wilderness they presently saw a town before them, and the name of that town is Vanity. And at the town there is a fair kept, called Vanity Fair; it is kept all the year long; it beareth the name of Vanity Fair, because the town where 'tis kept is lighter than vanity; and also because all that is there sold, or that cometh thither, is vanity. As is the saying of the wise, "All that cometh is vanity."³

This fair is no new-erected business, but a thing of ancient standing; I will show you the original of it.

²*Tophet.* A dump outside Jerusalem. A fire was kept burning to consume the dead bodies, bones, and filth deposited there. This led to Tophet's being used as a synonym for hell.

³"All that cometh is vanity." The quotation is from Ecclesiastes 11:8.

Almost five thousand years ago, there were pilgrims walking to the celestial city, as these two honest persons are; and Beelzebub, Apollyon, and Legion,⁴ with their companions, perceiving by the path that the pilgrims made, that their way to the city lay through this town of Vanity, they contrived here to set up a fair; a fair wherein should be sold all sorts of vanity, and that it should last all the year long. Therefore at this fair are all such merchandise sold, as houses, lands, trades, places, honors, preferments, titles, countries, kingdoms, lusts, pleasures, and delights of all sorts, as lives, blood, bodies, souls, silver, gold, pearls, precious stones, and what not.

And moreover, at this fair there is at all times to be seen juggling, cheats, games, plays, fools, apes, knaves, and rogues, and that of all sorts.

Here are to be seen, too, and that for nothing, thefts, murders, adulteries, false-swearers, and that of a blood-red color.

And as in other fairs of less moment there are the several rows and streets under their proper names, where such and such wares are vended, so here likewise you have the proper places, rows, streets (viz.,

countries and kingdoms) where the wares of this fair are soonest to be found: Here is the Britain Row, the French Row, the Italian Row, the Spanish Row, the German Row, where several sorts of vanities are to be sold.

Now, as I said, the way to the celestial city lies just through this town where this lusty fair is kept; and he that will go to the city, and yet not go through this town, "must needs go out of the world."⁵ The Prince of Princes⁶ himself, when here, went through this town to his own country, and that upon a fair-day, too; yea, and as I think, it was Beelzebub, the chief lord of this fair, that invited him to buy of his vanities; yea, would have made him lord of the fair, would he but have done him reverence as he went through the town. Yea, because he was such a person of honor, Beelzebub had him from street to street, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world⁷ in a little time, that he might, if possible, allure that Blessed One to cheapen and buy some of his vanities; but he had no mind to the merchandise, and therefore left the town, without laying out so much as one farthing upon these vanities. This fair therefore is an ancient thing, of long standing, and a very great fair.

Now these pilgrims, as I said, must needs go through this fair. Well, so they did; but behold, even as they entered into the fair, all the people in the fair were moved, and the town itself as it were in a hubbub about

⁴*Beelzebub, Apollyon, and Legion.* Various inhabitants of hell.

⁵*go out of the world.* To die.

⁶*The Prince of Princes.* Jesus.

⁷*showed him all the kingdoms of the world.* This incident is described in Matthew 4:8-10.



them; and that for several reasons; for,

First: The pilgrims were clothed with such kind of raiment as was diverse from the raiment of any that traded in that fair. The people therefore of the fair made a great gazing upon them; some said they were fools, some they were bedlams,⁸ and some they were outlandish-men.⁹

Secondly: And as they wondered at their apparel, so they did likewise at their speech; for few could understand what they said. They naturally spoke the language of Canaan,¹⁰ but they that kept the fair were the men of this world; so that from one end of the fair to the other they seemed barbarians each to the other.

Thirdly: But that which did not a little amuse the merchandisers was that these pilgrims set very light by all their wares; they cared not so much as to look upon them; and if

they called upon them to buy, they would put their fingers in their ears, and cry, "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity,"¹¹ and look upward, signifying that their trade and traffic was in heaven.

One chanced, mockingly, beholding the carriages of the men, to say unto them, "What will ye buy?" But they, looking gravely upon him, answered, "We buy the Truth." At that there was an occasion taken to despise the men the more; some mocking, some taunting, some speaking reproachfully, and some calling upon others to smite them. At last things came to a hubbub and a great stir in the fair, insomuch that all order was confounded. Now was

⁸*bedlams.* Lunatics. Bedlam is a contraction of Bethlehem, the name of a notorious London insane asylum.

⁹*outlandish-men.* Outlanders or foreigners.

¹⁰*Canaan.* The Biblical "Promised Land."

¹¹"Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity." The quotation is from Psalms 119:37.

word presently brought to the great one of the fair, who quickly came down and deputed some of his most trusty friends to take those men into examination, about whom the fair was almost overturned. So the men were brought to examination; and they that sat upon them¹² asked them whence they came, whither they went, and what they did there in such an unusual garb. The men told them that they were pilgrims and strangers in the world, and that they were going to their own country, which was the heavenly Jerusalem; and that they had given no occasion to the men of the town, nor yet to the merchandisers, thus to abuse them, and to let¹³ them in their journey, except it was for that, when one asked them what they would buy, they said they would buy the Truth. But they that were appointed to examine them did not believe them to be any other than bedlams and mad, or else such as came to put all things into a confusion in the fair. Therefore they took them and beat

them, and besmeared them with dirt, and then put them into the cage that they might be made a spectacle to all the men of the fair. There therefore they lay for some time, and were made the objects of any man's sport, or malice, or revenge, the great one of the fair laughing still at all that befell them. But the men being patient, and not rendering railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing, and



¹²*sat upon them.* Sat as judges.

¹³*let.* Hinder.



giving good words for bad, and kindness for injuries done, some men in the fair that were more observing, and less prejudiced than the rest, began to check and blame the baser sort for their continual abuses done by them to the men; they therefore

in angry manner let fly at them again, counting them as bad as the men in the cage, and telling them that they seemed confederates, and should be made partakers of their misfortunes. The other replied that for aught they could see, the men were quiet, and sober, and intended nobody any harm; and that there were many that traded in their fair that were more worthy to be put into the cage, yea, and pillory, too, than were the men that they had abused. Thus, after divers words had passed on both sides—the men behaving themselves all the while very wisely and soberly before them—they fell to some blows among themselves, and did harm one to another. Then were these two poor men brought before their examiners again, and there charged as being guilty of the late hubbub that had been in the fair. So they beat them pitifully and hanged irons upon them, and led them in chains up and down the fair, for an example and a terror to others, lest any should speak in their behalf, or join themselves unto them. But Christian and Faithful behaved themselves yet more wisely, and received the ignominy and shame that were cast upon them with so much meekness and patience that it won to their side (though but a few in comparison of the rest) several of the men in the fair.

This put the other party yet into a greater rage, insomuch that they concluded¹⁴ the death of these two men. Wherefore they threatened

that neither cage nor irons should serve their turn, but they should die, for the abuse they had done, and for deluding the men of the fair.

Then were they remanded to the cage again, until further order should be taken with them. So they put them in, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

Here also they called again to mind what they had heard from their faithful friend Evangelist, and were the more confirmed in their way and sufferings by what he told them would happen to them. They also now comforted each other, that whose lot it was to suffer, even he should have the best of it; therefore each man secretly wished that he might have that preferment; but committing themselves to the all-wise disposal of Him that ruleth all things, with much content they abode in the condition in which they were, until they should be otherwise disposed of.

[Christian and Faithful are brought into court and arraigned before Judge Hategood. A jury, made up of Mr. Blind-man, Mr. No-good, Mr. Malice, Mr. Love-lust, Mr. Live-loose, Mr. Heady, Mr. High-mind, Mr. Enmity, Mr. Liar, Mr. Cruelty, Mr. Hate-light, and Mr. Implacable, condemns Faithful to death, and he is burned at the stake. Christian, however, escapes and continues on to the Celestial City.]

¹⁴concluded. Decided upon.

Discussion

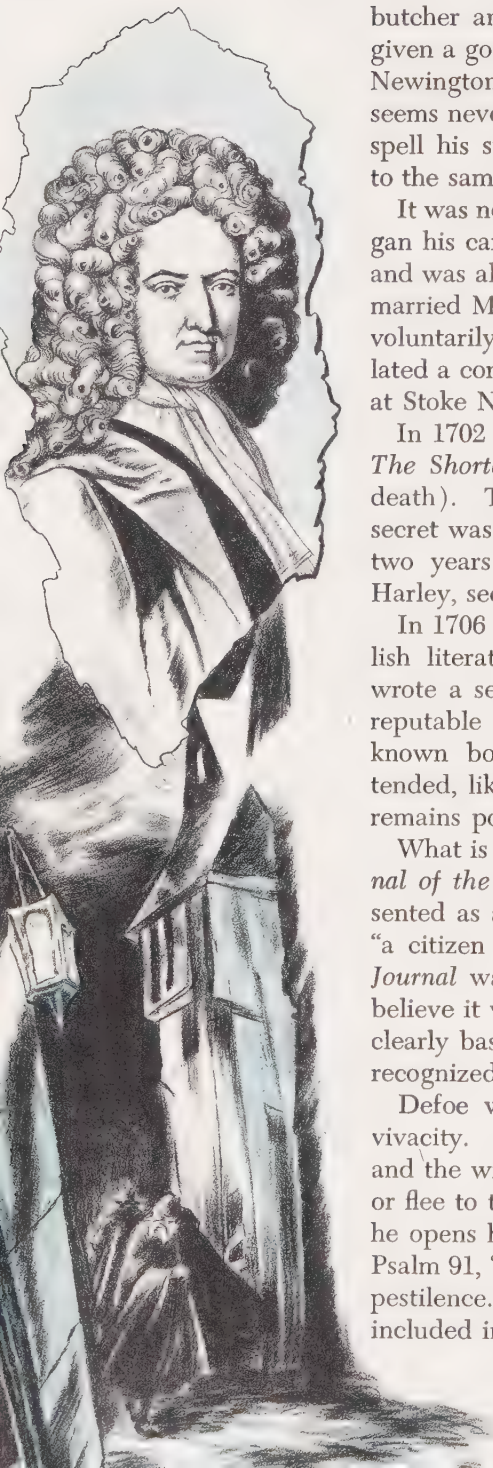
1. What did Christian find in the Bible that caused him to weep and tremble?
 2. How does Christian's family react to his concern about his salvation?
- What do you think is symbolized by the "shining light" which Evangelist points out to Christian?
- What activities carried on there make Vanity Fair an appropriate name?
- How do you interpret Bunyan's statement that to reach the Celestial City one must go through Vanity Fair?
- What parallel does Bunyan draw between Christian and Jesus?
- Why were the merchants of Vanity Fair so determined to destroy Christian and Faithful?
- What is meant by the statement that "each man secretly wished that he might have that preferment"?
- In what sense is this selection allegorical? What parts of the selection are realistic?
10. What is the effect on the reader of Bunyan's style? What would be the effect of rewriting the story in modern language?

Research

Some interesting comparisons can be made between *The Pilgrim's Progress* and the famous morality play *Everyman*. Write an essay in which you point out similarities between Christian and Everyman. Are there differences between them? Which characters in *Everyman* would be at home in Vanity Fair?

2. One of the great nineteenth-century novelists, William Makepeace Thackeray, wrote a novel which he called *Vanity Fair*. If you are looking for a difficult but rewarding book to read, this may be it. In your report be sure to explain Thackeray's choice of title.

In 1894 W. T. Stead caused a sensation in the United States with his book *If Christ Came to Chicago*. His conclusion was that Christ would be treated much as he had been in Jerusalem. The question is still interesting, and you might write a worthwhile essay on how Christ would be treated if he came to your town.



DANIEL DEFOE was born in London, probably in 1659. This date would have made him six years old at the time of the Great Plague. His father, James Foe, was a butcher and apparently a prosperous one, for Daniel was given a good education. He attended an academy at Stoke Newington that was popular among Dissenters. Daniel seems never to have been quite certain how he preferred to spell his surname. Within a single year he signed letters to the same correspondent Foe, de Foe, and Defoe.

It was not as a writer but as a businessman that Defoe began his career. He was a commission merchant for a time and was also for a time owner of a tile factory. In 1684 he married Mary Tuffley. In 1692 he went bankrupt but later voluntarily paid off all his debts. He apparently accumulated a considerable fortune, for he later built a large house at Stoke Newington for his family.

In 1702 Defoe wrote a satire on the Church of England, *The Shortest Way with Dissenters* (namely: put them to death). The book was published anonymously, but Defoe's secret was soon discovered and he was arrested. He spent two years in prison before the Whig statesman, Robert Harley, secured his release.

In 1706 Defoe wrote the first ghost story in modern English literature, "The Apparition of Mrs. Veal." He then wrote a series of realistic novels, most of them about disreputable characters. The exception is today his best-known book, *Robinson Crusoe*, published in 1719. Intended, like *Gulliver's Travels*, for adults, *Robinson Crusoe* remains popular as a children's story.

What is undoubtedly Defoe's most amazing book, *A Journal of the Plague Year*, was published in 1722. It is presented as a true account of the plague of 1665, written by "a citizen who continued all the while in London." The *Journal* was signed "H.F.," which for a time led some to believe it was the work of an uncle, Henry Foe. Although clearly based on accurate source material, the book is now recognized as one of Defoe's cleverest pieces of fiction.

Defoe wrote plainly and directly, but with spirit and vivacity. The *Journal* begins with the coming of the plague and the writer's indecision as to whether to stay in London or flee to the country. His decision is made for him when he opens his Bible and by chance finds himself reading in Psalm 91, "Surely he shall deliver thee . . . from the noisome pestilence." Both the opening and closing paragraphs are included in the following brief selection.

DANIEL DEFOE 1659?–1731



A Journal of the Plague Year

IT was about the beginning of September 1664, that I, among the rest of my neighbours, heard, in ordinary discourse, that the plague was returned again in Holland. . . . We had no such thing as printed newspapers¹ in those days to spread rumours and reports of things, and to improve them by the invention of men, as I have lived to see practiced since. But such things as those were gathered from the letters of merchants and others who corresponded abroad, and from them was handed about by word of mouth only; so that things did not spread instantly over the whole nation, as they do now. But it seems the Gov-

ernment had a true account of it, and several councils were held about ways to prevent its coming over; but all was kept very private. Hence it was that this rumour died off again, and people began to forget it, as a thing we were very little concerned in, and that we hoped was not true, till the latter end of November or the beginning of December 1664, when two men, said to be Frenchmen, died of the plague in Long Acre, or rather at the upper end of Drury Lane. [Deaths from the plague increased during the spring, but it was not until June that the numbers became alarming.]

I lived without Aldgate, about midway between Aldgate Church and Whitechapel Bars, on the left hand or north side of the street; and

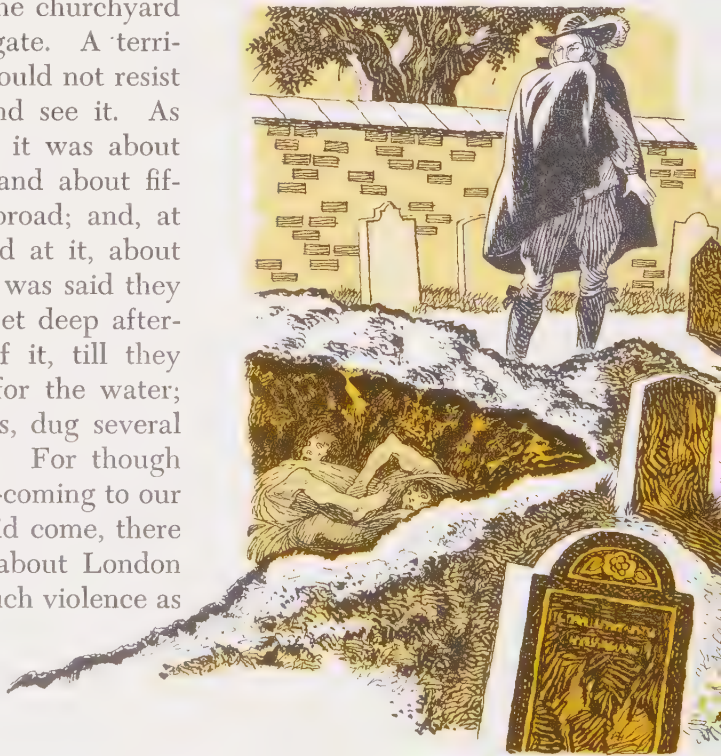
¹newspapers. The first daily newspaper, the *Daily Courant*, appeared in 1702.

as the distemper had not reached to that side of the city, our neighbourhood continued very easy. But at the other end of the town their consternation was very great; and the richer sort of people, especially the nobility and gentry from the west part of the city, thronged out of town with their families and servants in an unusual manner; and this was more particularly seen in Whitechapel; that is to say, the Broad Street where I lived; indeed nothing was to be seen but waggons and carts, with goods, women, servants, children, &c.; coaches filled with people of the better sort, and horsemen attending them, and all hurrying away. . . .

I went all the first part of the time freely about the streets, though not so freely as to run myself into apparent danger, except when they dug the great pit in the churchyard of our parish of Aldgate. A terrible pit it was, and I could not resist my curiosity to go and see it. As near as I may judge, it was about forty feet in length, and about fifteen or sixteen feet broad; and, at the time I first looked at it, about nine feet deep; but it was said they dug it near twenty feet deep afterwards in one part of it, till they could go no deeper for the water; for they had, it seems, dug several large pits before this. For though the plague was long a-coming to our parish, yet, when it did come, there was no parish in or about London where it raged with such violence as

in the two parishes of Aldgate and Whitechapel.

I say they had dug several pits in another ground, when the distemper began to spread in our parish, and especially when the dead-carts began to go about, which was not in our parish till the beginning of August. Into these pits they had put perhaps fifty or sixty bodies each; then they made larger holes, wherein they buried all that the cart brought in a week, which, by the middle to the end of August, came to from 200 to 400 a week; and they could not well dig them larger, because of the order of the magistrates confining them to leave no bodies within six feet of the surface; and the water coming on at about seventeen or eighteen feet, they could not well, I



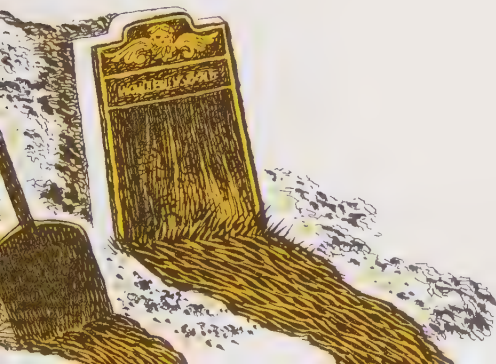
say, put more in one pit. But now, at the beginning of September, the plague raging in a dreadful manner, and the number of burials in our parish increasing to more than was ever buried in any parish about London of no larger extent, they ordered this dreadful gulf to be dug, for such it was rather than a pit.

They had supposed this pit would have supplied them for a month or more when they dug it, and some blamed the churchwardens for suffering such a frightful thing, telling them they were making preparations to bury the whole parish, and the like; but time made it appear the churchwardens knew the condition of the parish better than they did; for the pit being finished the 4th of September, I think they began to bury in it the 6th, and by the 20th, which was just two weeks, they had thrown into it 1114 bodies, when they were obliged to fill it up, the bodies being then come to lie within six feet of the surface. I doubt not but there may be some ancient persons alive in the parish who can justify the fact of this, and are able to show even in what place of the churchyard the pit lay better than I can. The mark of it also was many years to be seen in

the churchyard on the surface, lying in length parallel with the passage which goes by the west wall of the churchyard out of Houndsditch, and turns east again into Whitechapel, coming out near the Three Nuns Inn.

It was about the 10th of September that my curiosity led, or rather drove, me to go and see this pit again, when there had been near 400 people buried in it; and I was not content to see it in the daytime, as I had done before, for then there would have been nothing to have been seen but the loose earth; for all the bodies that were thrown in were immediately covered with earth by those they called the buriers, which at other times were called bearers; but I resolved to go in the night and see some of them thrown in.

There was a strict order to prevent people coming to those pits, and that was only to prevent infection. But after some time that order was more necessary, for people that were infected and near their end, and delirious also, would run to those pits, wrapped in blankets or rugs, and throw themselves in, and, as they said, bury themselves. I cannot say that the officers suffered any willingly to lie there; but I have heard that in a great pit in Finsbury, in the parish of Cripple-gate, it lying open then to the fields, for it was not then walled about, they came and threw themselves in, and expired there, before they threw any earth upon them; and that when



they came to bury others, and found them there, they were quite dead, though not cold.

This may serve a little to describe the dreadful condition of that day, though it is impossible to say anything that is able to give a true idea of it to those who did not see it, other than this, that it was indeed very, very, very dreadful, and such as no tongue can express.

I got admittance into the churchyard by being acquainted with the sexton who attended, who, though he did not refuse me at all, yet, earnestly persuaded me not to go, telling me very seriously, for he was a good, religious, and sensible man, that it was indeed their business and duty to venture and to run all hazards, and that in it they might hope to be preserved; but that I had no apparent call to it but my own curiosity, which, he said, he believed I would not pretend was sufficient to justify my running that hazard. I told him I had been pressed in my mind to go, and that perhaps it might be an instructing sight, that might not be without its uses. "Nay," says the good man, "if you will venture upon that score, name of God, go in; for, depend upon it, 'twill be a sermon to you, it may be, the best that ever you heard in your life. It is a speaking sight," says he, "and has a voice with it, and a loud one, to call us all to repentance"; and with that he opened the door and said, "Go, if you will."

His discourse had shocked my

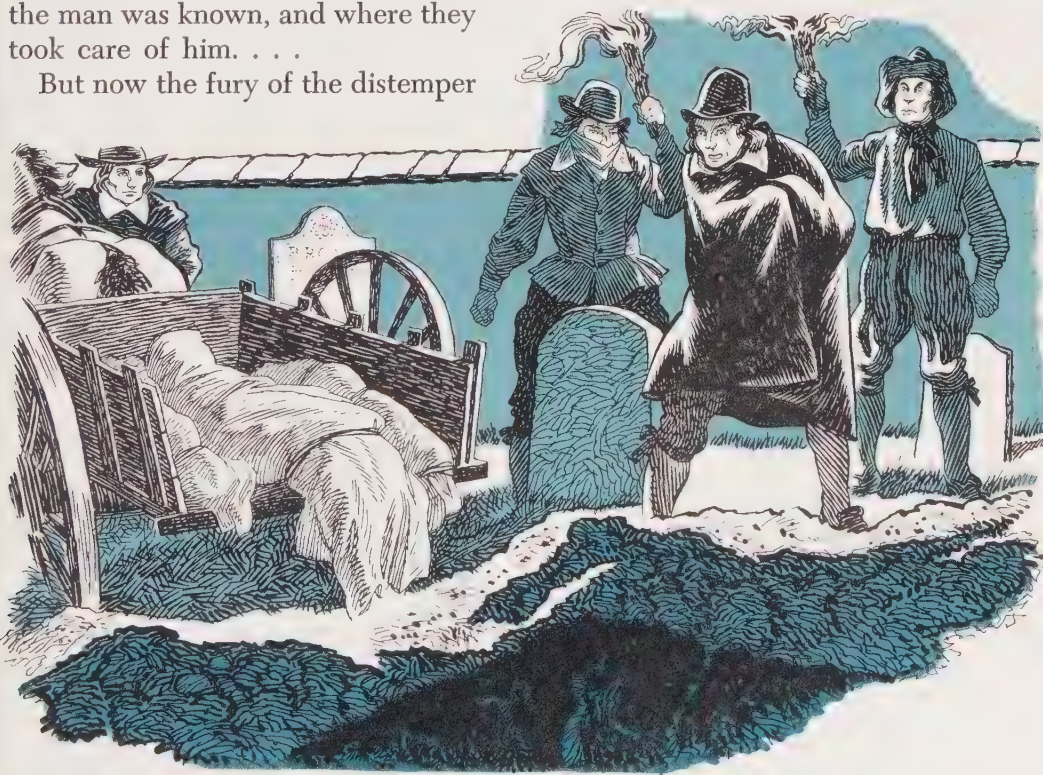
resolution a little, and I stood wavering for a good while, but just at that interval I saw two links come over from the end of the Minorities, and heard the bellman, and then appeared a dead-cart, as they called it, coming over the streets; so I could no longer resist my desire of seeing it, and went in. There was nobody, as I could perceive at first, in the churchyard, or going into it, but the buriers and the fellow that drove the cart, or rather led the horse and cart; but when they came up to the pit they saw a man go to and again, muffled up in a brown cloak, and making motions with his hands under his cloak, as if he was in a great agony, and the buriers immediately gathered about him, supposing he was one of those poor delirious or desperate creatures that used to pretend, as I have said, to bury themselves. He said nothing as he walked about, but two or three times groaned very deeply and loud, and sighed as he would break his heart.

When the buriers came up to him they soon found he was neither a person infected and desperate, as I have observed above, or a person distempered in mind, but one oppressed with a dreadful weight of grief indeed, having his wife and several of his children all in the cart that was just come in with him, and he followed in an agony and excess of sorrow. He mourned heartily, as it was easy to see, but with a kind of masculine grief that could not give

itself vent by tears; and calmly defying the buriers to let him alone, said he would only see the bodies thrown in and go away, so they left importuning him. But no sooner was the cart turned round and the bodies shot into the pit promiscuously, which was a surprise to him, for he at least expected they would have been decently laid in, though indeed he was afterwards convinced that was impractical; I say, no sooner did he see the sight but he cried out aloud, unable to contain himself. I could not hear what he said, but he went backward two or three steps and fell down in a swoon. The buriers ran to him and took him up, and in a little while he came to himself, and they led him away to the Pie Tavern over against the end of Houndsditch, where, it seems, the man was known, and where they took care of him. . . .

But now the fury of the distemper

increased to such a degree that even the markets were but very thinly furnished with provisions or frequented with buyers compared to what they were before; and the Lord Mayor caused the country people who brought provisions to be stopped in the streets leading into the town and to sit down there with their goods, where they sold what they brought, and went immediately away; and this encouraged the country people greatly to do so, for they sold their provisions at the very entrances into the town, and even in the fields, as particularly in the fields beyond Whitechapel, in Spitalfields; also in St. George's Fields in Southwark, in Bunhill Fields, and in a great field called Wood's Close, near



Islington. Thither the Lord Mayor, aldermen, and magistrates sent their officers and servants to buy for their families, themselves keeping within doors as much as possible, and the like did many other people; and after this method was taken, the country people came with great cheerfulness, and brought provisions of all sorts, and very seldom got any harm, which I suppose, added also to that report of their being miraculously preserved.

As for my little family, having thus, as I have said, laid in a store of bread, butter, cheese, and beer, I took my friend and physician's advice and locked myself up, and my family, and resolved to suffer the hardship of living a few months without flesh-meat, rather than to purchase it at the hazard of our lives.

But though I confined my family, I could not prevail upon my unsatisfied curiosity to stay within entirely myself; and though I generally came frightened and terrified home, yet I could not restrain; only that indeed I did not do it so frequently as at first. . . .

It is here, however, to be observed, that after the funerals became so many that people could not toll the bell, mourn, or weep, or wear black for one another, as they did before; no, nor so much as make coffins for those that died; so after a while the fury of the Infection appeared to be so increased, that in short, they shut up no houses at all.

It seemed enough that all the remedies of that kind had been used till they were found fruitless, and that the Plague spread itself with an irresistible fury; so that as the Fire,² the succeeding year, spread itself, and burnt with such violence, that the citizens, in despair, gave over their endeavors to extinguish it, so in the Plague, it came at last to such violence that the people sat still, looking at one another, and seemed quite abandoned to despair. Whole streets seemed to be desolated, and not to be shut up only, but to be emptied of their inhabitants; doors were left open, and windows stood shattering with the wind in empty houses for want of people to shut them. In a word, people began to give up themselves to their fears, and to think that all regulations and methods were in vain, and that there was nothing to be hoped for, but an universal Desolation; and it was even in the height of this general despair that it pleased God to stay his hand, and to slacken the fury of the Contagion, in such a manner as was even surprising (like its beginning), and demonstrated it to be his own particular Hand, and that above, if not without, the Agency of Means, as I shall take notice of in its proper place. . . .

I can go no farther here. I should be counted censorious, and perhaps unjust, if I should enter into the unpleasing work of reflecting, what-

²*the Fire.* See *Pepys' Diary*, page 146.

ever cause there was for it, upon the unthankfulness and return of all manner of wickedness among us, which I was so much an eyewitness of myself. I shall conclude the account of this calamitous year, therefore, with a coarse but sincere stanza of my own, which I placed at the end of my ordinary memoran-

dums the same year they were written:—

*A dreadful plague in London was
In the year sixty-five,
Which swept an hundred thousand
souls
Away—yet I alive.*

H. F.

Discussion

1. What was Defoe's opinion of newspapers? In what ways might a newspaper have been helpful during the Plague?
2. How does Defoe create the impression that the *Journal* is an eyewitness account? Refer to specific passages in your answer.
3. Describe the burial procedures. What effect did the visit to the pit have upon the writer? Upon the man who came to see his family buried? What is your reaction to the scene? What, according to Defoe, made any other burial procedure impractical?
4. How was London fed during the Plague?
Point out passages which indicate that Defoe was a religious man. What criticism of his fellow Londoners does Defoe make in his concluding paragraph?

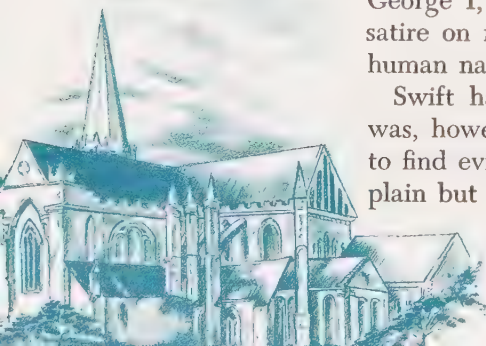
Research

1. One or more members of the class might read additional portions of *A Journal of the Plague Year* and summarize their reading for the class.
2. To provide a broader background for this selection, you might look up the plague in several encyclopedias and history books. What caused the great plagues of the past? What protection do we have against plagues today?
3. Edgar Allan Poe based one of his short stories, "The Masque of the Red Death," upon the terror inspired by a plague. A brief report on this story might point out similarities between the London plague and the one Poe imagined. Do you think Poe had read Defoe's *Journal*?



JONATHAN SWIFT

1667–1745



JONATHAN SWIFT was born in Dublin, where his father had been business manager for a group of lawyers. The elder Swift died shortly before the birth of his son. Jonathan was brought up by his mother and an uncle who tried hard to understand and help the sickly and gloomy youth. Swift attended Trinity College in Dublin. After graduation he went to England, where family influence obtained for him the position of secretary to Sir William Temple, one of the leaders of the Whig Party.

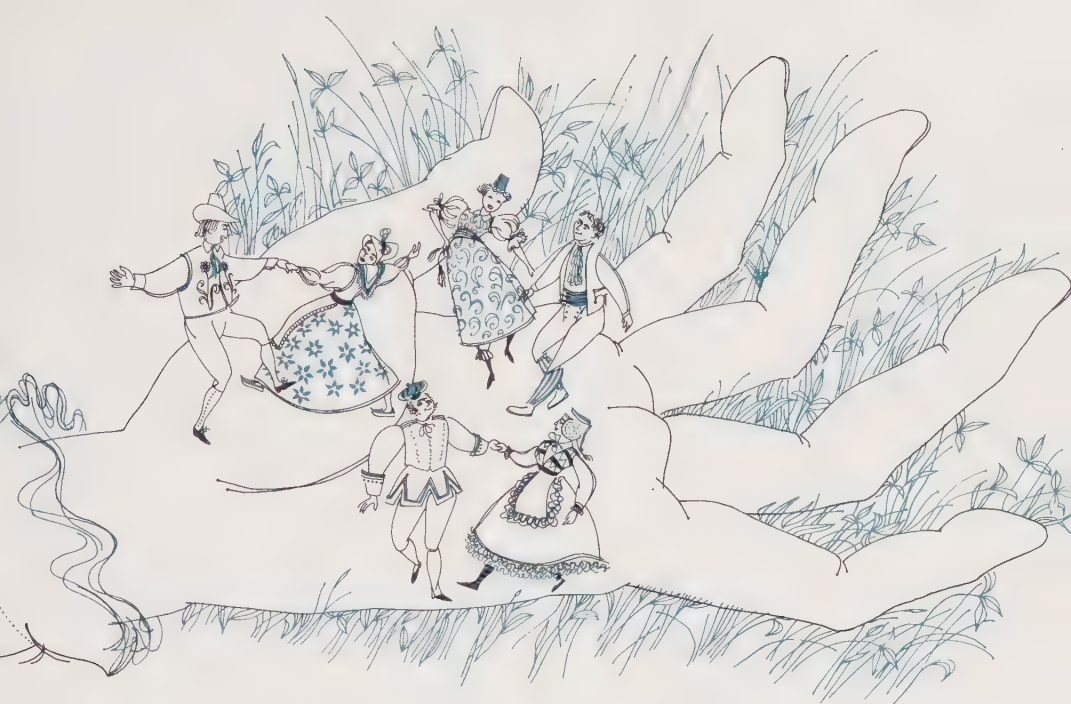
Swift knew early that he wanted to be a writer, but seeing no financial future in it, he went to Oxford and prepared for the ministry. Through Whig influence he secured several “livings” in Ireland, but he paid other clergymen to perform his duties while he remained in London.

Swift privately shared Tory views, and when the Tories came into power in 1710, he rose rapidly in the party. He was appointed Dean of St. Patrick’s in Dublin in 1713, and when the Tories lost control the following year, he retired to Ireland. Swift’s most bitter satire, *A Modest Proposal*, was written on behalf of the poor of Ireland. The proposal was that the problem of starving children in Ireland be solved by using the children as food for the rich. This savage satire resulted in some government reforms, and the Irish swore by their dean to the end.

During his first twelve years in Dublin, Swift devoted much of his time to writing *The Travels of Lemuel Gulliver*, which was published anonymously in 1726. There are four parts to *Gulliver’s Travels*, as the book was later titled. The first voyage left Gulliver shipwrecked on the island of Lilliput. He next visited Brobdingnag, a land of giants. His third voyage brought him to Laputa, a land of absent-minded musicians, mathematicians, and philosophers. The last voyage was to the land of the Houyhnhnms, a race of intelligent horses, served by humans called Yahoos.

Gulliver’s Travels can be read on two levels. It is a delightful story of fantastic adventures; at the same time it is the sharpest kind of satire. Although contemporary readers of the book found in it specific attacks on the court of George I, now obscured, readers still can appreciate the satire on royal “pomp and circumstance” and, indeed, on human nature in general.

Swift had wide interests and a keen intelligence. He was, however, cynical and pessimistic, always more ready to find evil than good in people. His prose is simple and plain but wonderfully expressive.



Gulliver's Travels

Part I. A Voyage to Lilliput

[Chapters I and II describe Gulliver's shipwreck, his swimming to shore, his falling asleep, and his wakening to find himself the captive of a race of people only six inches tall. Chapter III, which describes life at the royal court of Lilliput, continues Gulliver's adventures and at the same time satirizes the court of George I.]

CHAPTER III

MY gentleness and good behavior had gained so far on the emperor and his court, and indeed upon the army and people in general, that I began to conceive hopes of getting my liberty in a short time. I took all possible methods to cultivate this favorable disposition. The natives came by degrees to be less apprehensive of any danger from me. I would sometimes lie down and let

five or six of them dance on my hand; and at last the boys and girls would venture to come and play at hide-and-seek in my hair. I had now made a good progress in understanding and speaking their language.

The emperor had a mind, one day, to entertain me with several of the country shows, wherein they exceed all nations I have known, both for dexterity and magnificence. I was diverted with none so much as that of the rope-dancers, performed upon

a slender white thread, extended about two feet, and twelve inches from the ground. Upon which I shall desire liberty, with the reader's patience, to enlarge a little.

This diversion is only practiced by those persons who are candidates for great employments and high favor at court. They are trained in this art from their youth, and are not always of noble birth or liberal education. When a great office is vacant, either by death or disgrace (which often happens), five or six of those candidates petition the emperor to entertain his majesty and the court with a dance on the rope; and whoever jumps the highest, without falling, succeeds in the office. Very often the chief ministers themselves are commanded to show their skill, and to convince the emperor that they have not lost their faculty. Flimnap,¹ the treasurer, is allowed to cut a caper on the strait rope, at least an inch higher than any other lord in the whole empire. I have seen him do the somersault several times together upon a trencher, fixed on a rope which is no thicker than a common packthread in England. My friend Reldresal, principal secretary for private affairs, is, in my opinion, if I am not partial, the second after the treasurer; the rest of the great officers are much upon a par.

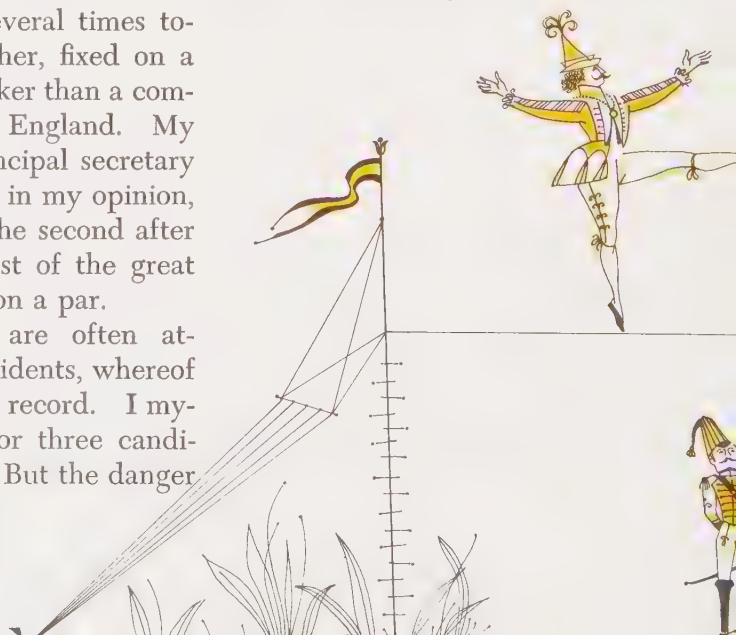
These diversions are often attended with fatal accidents, whereof great numbers are on record. I myself have seen two or three candidates break a limb. But the danger

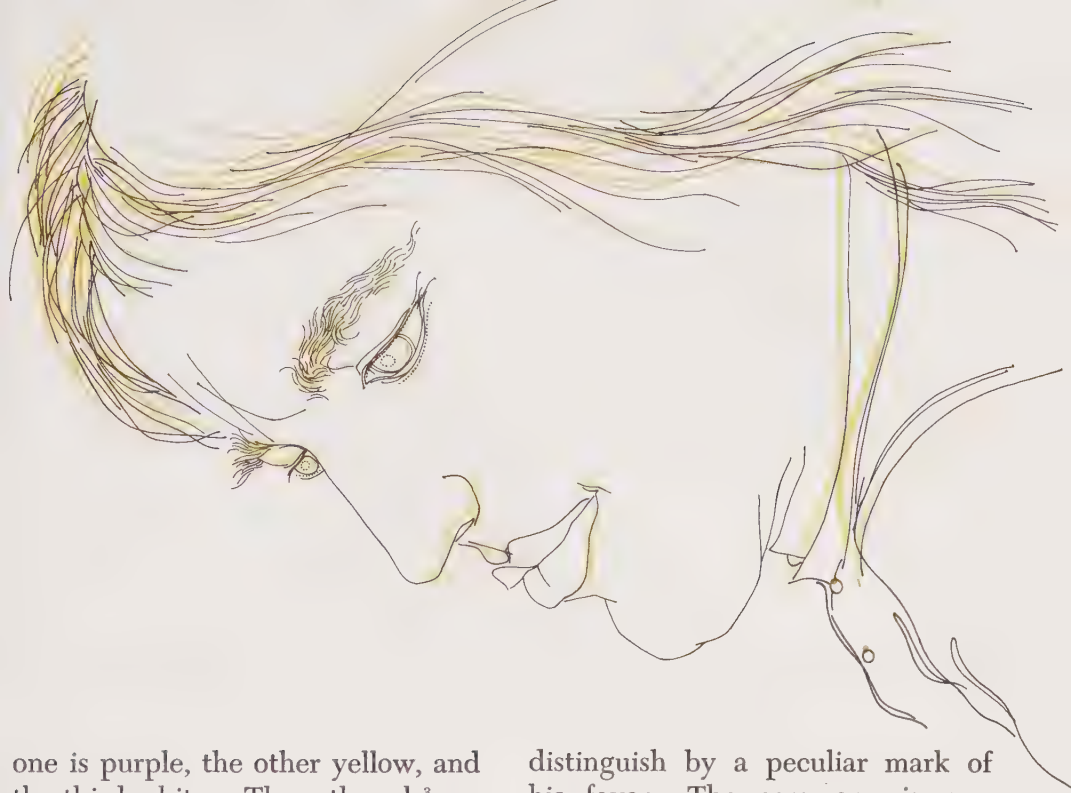
is much greater when the ministers themselves are commanded to show their dexterity; for, by contending to excel themselves and their fellows, they strain so far that there is hardly one of them who hath not received a fall, and some of them two or three. I was assured that a year or two before my arrival, Flimnap would have infallibly broke his neck if one of the king's cushions, that accidentally lay on the ground, had not weakened the force if his fall.²

There is likewise another diversion, which is only shown before the emperor and empress and first minister upon particular occasions. The emperor lays on the table three fine silken threads, of six inches long;

¹*Flimnap*. Sir Robert Walpole had been appointed First Lord of the Treasury in 1715, but court intrigue forced him out two years later. He was again appointed to the post in 1721.

²*his fall*. Walpole's dismissal from the treasury might have ended his political career had not the Duchess of Kendal used her influence with the king.



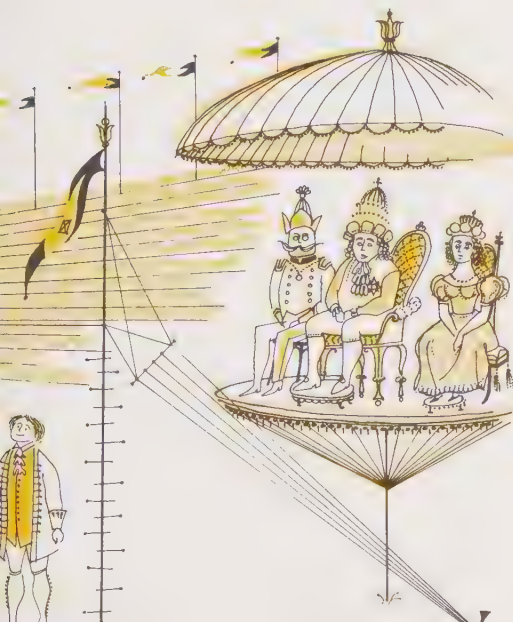


one is purple, the other yellow, and the third white. These threads³ are proposed as prizes for those persons whom the emperor hath a mind to

³*These threads.* A satire on the Orders of the Garter, Bath, and Thistle. Walpole once described these ribbons as a "cheap means" of rewarding politicians who were useful to the king.

distinguish by a peculiar mark of his favor. The ceremony is performed in his majesty's great chamber of state, where the candidates are to undergo a trial of dexterity very different from the former, and such as I have not observed the least resemblance of in any other country of the old or the new world.

The emperor holds a stick in his hands, both ends parallel to the horizon, while the candidates, advancing one by one, sometimes leap over the stick, sometimes creep under it backward and forward several times, according as the stick is advanced or depressed. Sometimes the emperor holds one end of the stick, and his first minister the other; sometimes the minister has it entirely to himself. Whoever performs his part with most agility and holds out the longest in leaping and creeping is





rewarded with the purple colored silk; the yellow is given to the next, and the white to the third, which they all wear girt twice round about the middle; and you see few great persons about this court who are not adorned with one of these girdles.

The horses of the army and those of the royal stables having been daily led before me, were no longer shy, but would come up to my very feet without starting. The riders would leap them over my hand as I held it on the ground; and one of the emperor's huntsmen, upon a large courser, took my foot, shoe and all, which was indeed a prodigious leap.

I had the good fortune to divert the emperor one day after a very extraordinary manner. I desired he

would order several sticks of two feet high, and the thickness of an ordinary cane, to be brought me; whereupon his majesty commanded the master of his woods to give directions accordingly; and the next morning six woodmen arrived with as many carriages, drawn by eight horses to each.

I took nine of these sticks, and fixing them firmly in the ground in a quadrangular figure, two foot and a half square, I took four other sticks and tied them parallel at each corner, about two foot from the ground; then I fastened my handkerchief to the nine sticks that stood erect, and extended it on all sides, till it was as tight as the top of a drum; and the four parallel sticks, rising about five



inches higher than the handkerchief, served as ledges on each side.

When I had finished my work I desired the emperor to let a troop of his best horse, twenty-four in number, come and exercise upon this plain. His majesty approved of the proposal, and I took them up one by one in my hands, ready mounted and armed, with the proper officers to exercise them. As soon as they got into order they divided into two parties, performed mock skirmishes, discharged blunt arrows, drew their swords, fled and pursued, attacked and retired, and, in short, discovered the best military discipline I ever

beheld. The parallel sticks secured them and their horses from falling over the stage; and the emperor was so much delighted⁴ that he ordered this entertainment to be repeated several days, and once was pleased to be lifted up and give the word of command; and, with great difficulty, persuaded even the empress herself to let me hold her in her close chair within two yards of the stage, from whence she was able to take a full view of the whole performance.

It was my good fortune that no ill accident happened in these entertainments; only once a fiery horse that belonged to one of the captains, pawing with his hoof, struck a hole in my handkerchief, and his foot slipping he overthrew his rider and

⁴*the emperor was so much delighted.* Military shows were a favorite pastime of George I.

himself; but I immediately relieved them both, and covering the hole with one hand, I set down the troop with the other in the same manner as I took them up. The horse that fell was strained in the left shoulder, but the rider got no hurt, and I repaired my handkerchief as well as I could; however, I would not trust to the strength of it any more in such dangerous enterprises.

About two or three days before I was set at liberty, as I was entertaining the court with these kind of feats, there arrived an express to inform his majesty that some of his subjects, riding near the place where I was first taken up, had seen a great black substance lying on the ground, very oddly shaped, extending its edges round as wide as his majesty's bedchamber, and rising up in the middle as high as a man; that it was no living creature, as they at first apprehended, for it lay on the grass without motion; and some of them had walked round it several times; that by mounting upon each other's shoulders they had got to the top, which was flat and even, and, stamping upon it, they found it was hollow within; that they humbly conceived it might be something belonging to the man-mountain; and if his majesty pleased, they would undertake to bring it with only five horses.

I presently knew what they meant, and was glad at heart to receive this intelligence. It seems upon my first



reaching the shore after our shipwreck, I was in such confusion that before I came to the place where I went to sleep, my hat, which I had fastened with a string to my head while I was rowing, and had stuck on all the time I was swimming, fell off after I came to land; the string, as I conjecture, breaking by some accident which I never observed, but thought my hat had been lost at sea. I entreated his imperial majesty to give orders it might be brought to me as soon as possible, describing to him the use and nature of it; and the next day the wagoners arrived with it, but not in a very good condition; they had bored two holes in the brim within an inch and a half of the edge, and fastened two hooks in the holes; these hooks were tied by a long cord to the harness, and thus my hat was dragged along for above half an English mile; but the ground in that country being extremely smooth and level, it received less damage than I expected. . . .



I had sent so many memorials and petitions for my liberty that his majesty at length mentioned the matter, first in the cabinet, and then in a full council; where it was opposed by none except Skyresh Bolgolam, who was pleased, without any provocation, to be my mortal enemy. But it was carried against him by the whole board, and confirmed by the emperor. That minister was *galbet*, or admiral of the realm, very much in his master's confidence, and a person well versed in affairs but of a morose and sour complexion. However, he was at length persuaded to comply; but prevailed that the articles and conditions upon which I should be set free, and to which I must swear, should be drawn up by himself.

These articles were brought to me by Skyresh Bolgolam in person, attended by two under-secretaries and

several persons of distinction. After they were read I was demanded to swear to the performance of them, first in the manner of my own country, and afterwards in the method prescribed by their laws; which was to hold my right foot in my left hand, and to place the middle finger of my right hand on the crown of my head, and my thumb on the tip of my right ear.

But because the reader may be curious to have some idea of the style and manner of expression peculiar to that people, as well as to know the articles upon which I recovered my liberty, I have made a translation of the whole instrument, word for word, as near as I was able, which I here offer to the public.

Golbasto Momaren Evlame Gurdilo Shefin Mully Ullly Gue, most mighty Emperor⁵ of Lilliput, delight and terror of the universe, whose dominions extend five thousand *blustrugs* (about twelve miles in circumference) to the extremities of the globe; monarch of all monarchs, taller than the sons of men; whose feet press down to the center, and whose head strikes against the sun; at whose nod the princes of the earth shake their knees; pleasant as the spring, comfortable as the summer, fruitful as autumn, dreadful as winter. His most sublime Majesty proposeth to the Man-mountain, lately arrived to our celestial dominions, the following articles, which by a solemn oath he shall be obliged to perform.

⁵most mighty Emperor. This passage satirizes the exaggerated compliments customarily paid kings in formal documents.

First. The Man-mountain shall not depart from our dominions without our license under our great seal.

2d. He shall not presume to come into our metropolis without our express order; at which time the inhabitants shall have two hours' warning to keep within their doors.

3d. The said Man-mountain shall confine his walks to our principal high roads, and not to walk or lie down in a meadow or field of corn.

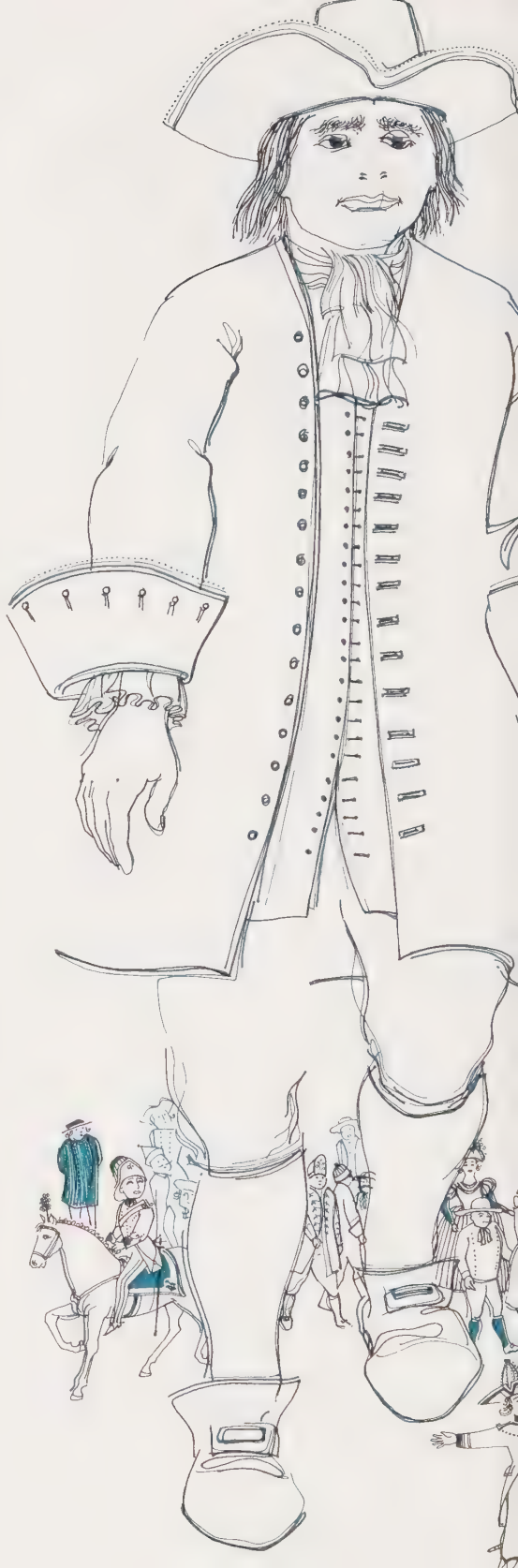
4th. As he walks the said roads, he shall take the utmost care not to trample upon the bodies of any of our loving subjects, their horses or carriages, nor take any of our said subjects into his hands without their own consent.

5th. If an express requires extraordinary dispatch, the Man-mountain shall be obliged to carry in his pocket the messenger and horse a six-days' journey once in every moon, and return the said messenger back (if so required) safe to our imperial presence.

6th. He shall be our ally against our enemies in the island of Blefuscu, and do his utmost to destroy their fleet which is now preparing to invade us.

7th. That the said Man-mountain shall at his times of leisure be aiding and assisting to our workmen in helping to raise certain great stones toward covering the wall of the principal park, and other our royal buildings.

8th. That the said Man-mountain shall, in two moons' time, de-



liver in an exact survey of the circumference of our dominions, by a computation of his own paces round the coast.

Lastly. That upon his solemn oath to observe all the above articles, the said Man-mountain shall have a daily allowance of meat and drink sufficient for the support of 1724 of our subjects, with free access to our royal person, and other marks of our favor. Given at our palace at Bel-falorac the twelfth day of the ninety-first moon of our reign.

I swore and subscribed to these articles with great cheerfulness and content, although some of them were not as honorable as I could have wished; which proceeded wholly from the malice of Skyresh Bolgolah the high admiral. Whereupon my chains were immediately unlocked, and I was at full liberty; the Emperor himself in person did me the honor to be by at the whole ceremony. I made my acknowledgements by prostrating myself at his majesty's feet; but he commanded me to rise; and after many gracious expressions, which to avoid the censure of vanity I shall not repeat, he added that he hoped I should prove a useful servant, and well deserve all the favors he had already conferred upon me, or might do for the future.

The reader may please to observe that in the last article for the recovery of my liberty the emperor stipulates to allow me a quantity of meat and drink sufficient for the support of 1724 Lilliputians. Some time after, asking a friend at court how they came to fix on that determined number, he told me that his majesty's mathematicians having taken the height of my body by the help of a quadrant, and finding it to exceed theirs in the proportion of twelve to one, they concluded, from the similarity of their bodies, that mine must contain at least 1724 of theirs, and consequently would require as much food as was necessary to support that number of Lilliputians. By which the reader may conceive an idea of the ingenuity of that people, as well as the prudent and exact economy of so great a prince.

[The following selection from Chapter VI presents the views of the Lilliputians on public service, ingratitude, and education.]

In choosing persons for all employments they have more regard to good morals than to great abilities; for, since government is necessary to mankind, they believe that the common size of human understandings is fitted to some station or other, and that Providence never intended to make the management of public affairs a mystery, to be compre-



hended only by a few persons of sublime genius, of which there seldom are three born in an age; but they suppose truth, justice, temperance, and the like to be in every man's power, the practice of which virtues, assisted by experience and a good intention, would qualify any man for the service of his country, except where a course of study is required. But they thought the want of moral virtues was so far from being supplied by superior endowments of the mind that employments could never be put into such dangerous hands as those of persons so qualified; and at least, that the mistakes, committed by ignorance in a virtuous disposition, would never be of such fatal consequence to the public weal as the practices of a man whose inclinations led him to be corrupt, and had great abilities to manage and multiply and defend his corruptions. . . .

Ingratitude is among them a capital crime, as we read it to have been in some other countries; for they reason thus, that whoever makes ill returns to his benefactor must needs be a common enemy to the rest of mankind, from whom he hath received no obligation, and therefore such a man is not fit to live.

Their notions relating to the duties of parents and children differ extremely from ours. They will never allow that a child is under any obligation to his father for begetting him, or to his mother for bringing him into the world, which, con-

sidering the miseries of human life, was neither a benefit in itself nor intended so by his parents. Upon these, and the like reasonings, their opinion is that parents are the last of all others to be trusted with the education of their own children; and therefore they have in every town public nurseries, where all parents, except cottagers and laborers, are obliged to send their infants of both sexes to be reared and educated when they come to the age of twenty moons, at which time they are supposed to have some rudiments of docility. These schools are of several kinds, suited to different qualities and to both sexes. They have certain professors well skilled in preparing children for such a condition of life as befits the rank of their parents, and their own capacities as well as inclinations. I shall first say something of the male nurseries, and then of the female.

The nurseries for males of noble or eminent birth are provided with grave and learned professors and their several deputies. The clothes and food of the children are plain and simple. They are bred up in the principles of honor, justice, courage, modesty, clemency, religion, and love of their country; they are always employed in some business, except in the times of eating and sleeping, which are very short, and two hours for diversions, consisting of bodily exercises. They are dressed by men till four years of age, and then are obliged to dress themselves,

although their quality be ever so great; and the women attendants, who are aged proportionably to ours at fifty, perform only the most menial offices. They are never suffered to converse with servants, but go together in smaller and greater numbers to take their diversions, and always in the presence of a professor, or one of his deputies. Their parents are suffered to see them only twice a year; the visit is to last but

an hour. They are allowed to kiss the child at meeting and parting; but a professor, who always stands by on those occasions, will not suffer them to whisper, or use any fondling expressions, or bring any presents of toys, sweet-meats, and the like.

The pension from each family for the education and entertainment of a child, upon failure of due payment, is levied by the Emperor's officers.

Discussion

1. Point out passages that illustrate Swift's skill in keeping his imaginary kingdom true to scale.
2. How was political advancement achieved at the court of Lilliput? What practices was Swift satirizing? What practices today might fall under the same heading?
3. What is Swift poking fun at in his account of the silken threads? What modern parallels does this system of awards suggest? How do you feel about the use of ribbons or medals as rewards?
4. What was Swift's answer to the "indispensable man" theory?
5. Why was ingratitude considered a capital crime in Lilliput? How serious a crime do you consider it?
6. Why were parents not entrusted with the education of their children in Lilliput? What is the present-day American attitude?
7. Point out examples of Swift's pessimism.

Research

1. Even if you read *Gulliver's Travels* as a child, you will find much in it now that you missed then. Perhaps a number of you might divide the book and summarize it in a series of oral reports.
2. You might try your hand at an essay in which Gulliver views, not the royal court of Lilliput, but your class, a club meeting, an Honors convocation, or some other situation. Remember to reduce yourself and classmates to the six-inch size.



CHARLES DICKENS

1812–1870

CHARLES DICKENS was born in Portsea, near Portsmouth, where his father was a navy clerk at the time. Two years later the Dickenses moved to London. The elder Dickens was imprisoned for debt several times, and to supplement the family income Mrs. Dickens for a time ran a "Boarding Establishment for Young Ladies." At the age of twelve Charles was set to pasting labels on bottles in a shoe-blackening factory.

By the time he was seventeen he had learned shorthand and became a court reporter, but he soon left court reporting for newspaper reporting. Beginning in 1833 he gained recognition with his *Sketches by Boz*, published in the *Old Monthly Magazine*. The popularity of these sketches led to a request for a new series, which developed into *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club*, published serially in 1836–37. Within six months the Pickwickians had become household words. Drapers were selling Pickwick chintzes, clothing stores were advertising Sam Weller corduroys, and men-about-town were smoking Pickwick cigars.

In 1836, well on the way to fame, Dickens married Catherine Hogarth. Twenty years later they separated, meanwhile having raised a family of ten children. On the heels of *Pickwick* came Dickens' first novel, *Oliver Twist*, published in 1837. From then on Dickens wrote almost constantly until his death, often working on several novels at the same time. He made a lecture tour of the United States in 1842, which provided him with material for *American Notes* and a novel, *Martin Chuzzlewit*, both critical of some aspects of American life. *David Copperfield*, published in 1850, was Dickens' own favorite, perhaps because it was partly autobiographical. *A Tale of Two Cities*, published in 1859, is a historical novel of the French Revolution.

Prosperous by 1856, Dickens bought Gadshill Place, near Rochester in Kent. There, except for lecture tours, he lived the rest of his life. Although Dickens thoroughly enjoyed both writing and lecturing, overwork probably contributed to his death.

With *Pickwick Papers* Dickens brought something new into English fiction: a humorous interpretation of everyday life among common people. In Chapter 30, from which the following selection is taken, the Pickwickians are spending the Christmas holidays at Manor Farm as the guests of Mr. Wardle. Besides Mr. Pickwick, the members of the Club are Messrs. Winkle, Snodgrass, and Tupman. Sam Weller is Mr. Pickwick's servant.

The Pickwick Papers



How the Pickwickians . . . Disported Themselves on the Ice

"NOW," said Wardle, after a substantial lunch, with the agreeable items of strong beer and cherry-brandy, had been done ample justice to; "what say you to an hour on the ice? We shall have plenty of time."

"Capital!" said Mr. Benjamin Allen.

"Prime!" ejaculated Mr. Bob Sawyer.

"You skate, of course, Winkle?" said Wardle.

"Ye-yes; oh, yes," replied Mr. Winkle. "I—I—am *rather* out of practice."

"Oh, *do* skate, Mr. Winkle," said Arabella. "I like to see it so much."

"Oh, it is *so* graceful," said another young lady.

A third young lady said it was elegant, and a fourth expressed her opinion that it was "swan-like."

"I should be very happy, I'm sure," said Mr. Winkle, reddening; "but I have not skates."

This objection was at once overruled. Trundle had a couple of pair, and the fat boy announced that there were half a dozen more downstairs: whereat Mr. Winkle expressed exquisite delight, and looked exquisitely uncomfortable.

Old Wardle led the way to a pretty large sheet of ice; and the fat boy and Mr. Weller having shoveled and



swept away the snow which had fallen on it during the night, Mr. Bob Sawyer adjusted his skates with a dexterity which to Mr. Winkle was perfectly marvellous, and described circles with his left leg, and cut figures of eight, and inscribed upon the ice, without once stopping for breath, a great many other pleasant and astonishing devices, to the excessive satisfaction of Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Tupman, and the ladies; which reached a pitch of positive enthusiasm when old Wardle and Benjamin Allen, assisted by the aforesaid Bob Sawyer, performed some mystic evolutions, which they called a reel.

All this time Mr. Winkle, with his face and hands blue with the cold, had been forcing a gimlet into the soles of his feet, and putting his skates on with the points behind, and getting the straps into a very complicated and entangled state, with the assistance of Mr. Snodgrass, who knew rather less about skates than a

Hindoo. At length, however, with the assistance of Mr. Weller, the unfortunate skates were firmly screwed and buckled on, and Mr. Winkle was raised to his feet.

"Now, then, sir," said Sam, in an encouraging tone; "off with you, and show 'em how to do it."

"Stop, Sam, stop!" said Mr. Winkle, trembling violently, and clutching



hold of Sam's arms with the grasp of a drowning man. "How slippery it is, Sam!"

"Not an uncommon thing upon ice, sir," replied Mr. Weller. "Hold up, sir!"

This last observation of Mr. Weller's bore reference to a demonstration Mr. Winkle made, at the instant, of a frantic desire to throw his feet

in the air and dash the back of his head on the ice.

"These—these—are very awkward skates; ain't they, Sam?" inquired Mr. Winkle, staggering.

"I'm afeerd there's a orkard gen'l'm'n in 'em sir," replied Sam.

"Now, Winkle," cried Mr. Pickwick, quite unconscious that there was anything the matter. "Come; the ladies are all anxiety."

"Yes, yes," replied Mr. Winkle, with a ghastly smile; "I'm coming."

"Just a-goin' to begin," said Sam, endeavouring to disengage himself. "Now, sir, start off!"

"Stop an instant, Sam," gasped Mr. Winkle, clinging most affectionately to Mr. Weller. "I find I've got a couple of coats at home that I don't want, Sam. You may have them, Sam."

"Thank'ee, sir," replied Mr. Weller.

"Never mind touching your hat, Sam," said Mr. Winkle, hastily. "You needn't take your hand away to do that. I meant to have given you five shillings this morning for a Christmas-box, Sam. I'll give it you this afternoon, Sam."

"You're wery good, sir," replied Mr. Weller.

"Just hold me at first, Sam; will you?" said Mr. Winkle. "There—that's right. I shall soon get in the way of it, Sam. Not too fast, Sam; not too fast."

Mr. Winkle, stooping forward with his body half doubled up, was being assisted over the ice by Mr. Weller, in a very singular and unswan-like

manner, when Mr. Pickwick most innocently shouted from the opposite bank:

"Sam!"

"Sir?"

"Here. I want you."

"Let go, sir," said Sam. "Don't you hear the governor a-callin'? Let go, sir."

With a violent effort, Mr. Weller disengaged himself from the grasp of the agonized Pickwickian, and in so doing administered a considerable impetus to the unhappy Mr. Winkle. With an accuracy which no degree of dexterity or practice could have insured, that unfortunate gentleman bore swiftly down into the center of the reel, at the very moment when Mr. Bob Sawyer was performing a flourish of unparalleled beauty. Mr. Winkle struck wildly against him, and with a loud crash they both fell heavily down. Mr. Pickwick ran to the spot. Bob Sawyer had risen to



his feet, but Mr. Winkle was far too wise to do anything of the kind in skates. He was seated on the ice making spasmodic efforts to smile; but anguish was depicted on every lineament of his countenance.

"Are you hurt?" inquired Mr. Benjamin Allen, with great anxiety.

"Not much," said Mr. Winkle, rubbing his back very hard.

"I wish you'd let me bleed¹ you," said Mr. Benjamin, with great eagerness.

"No, thank you," replied Mr. Winkle, hurriedly.

"I really think you had better," said Allen.

"Thank you," replied Mr. Winkle, "I'd rather not."

"What do *you* think, Mr. Pickwick?" inquired Bob Sawyer.

Mr. Pickwick was excited and indignant. He beckoned to Mr. Weller, and said, in a stern voice, "Take his skates off."

"No; but really I had scarcely begun," remonstrated Mr. Winkle.

"Take his skates off," repeated Mr. Pickwick, firmly.

The command was not to be resisted. Mr. Winkle allowed Sam to obey it in silence.

"Lift him up," said Mr. Pickwick. Sam assisted him to rise.

Mr. Pickwick retired a few paces apart from the bystanders, and beckoning his friend to approach, fixed a searching look upon him, and uttered, in a low but distinct and emphatic tone, these remarkable words:

"You're a humbug, sir."

"A what?" said Mr. Winkle, starting.

"A humbug, sir. I will speak plainer, if you wish it. An impostor, sir."

With these words Mr. Pickwick turned slowly on his heel, and rejoined his friends.

While Mr. Pickwick was delivering himself of the sentiment just recorded, Mr. Weller and the fat boy, having by their joint endeavours cut out a slide, were exercising themselves thereupon in a very masterly and brilliant manner. Sam Weller, in particular, was displaying that beautiful feat of fancy sliding which is currently denominated "knocking at the cobbler's door," and which is achieved by skimming over the ice on one foot, and occasionally giving a postman's knock upon it with the other. It was a good long slide, and there was something in the motion which Mr. Pickwick, who was very cold with standing still, could not help envying.

"It looks a nice, warm exercise that, doesn't it?" he inquired of Wardle, when that gentleman was thoroughly out of breath by reason of the indefatigable manner in which he had converted his legs into a pair of compasses, and drawn complicated problems on the ice.

¹*bled.* Drawing blood from an ailing person was formerly a common medical practice. Allen and Sawyer were medical students, eager to try out a newly-learned skill.

"Ah, it does indeed," replied Wardle. "Do you slide?"

"I used to do so, on the gutters, when I was a boy," replied Mr. Pickwick.

"Try it now," said Wardle.

"Oh, do, please, Mr. Pickwick!" cried all the ladies.

"I should be very happy to afford you any amusement," replied Mr. Pickwick, "but I haven't done such a thing these thirty years."

Mr. Pickwick paused, considered, pulled off his gloves and put them in his hat; took two or three short runs, baulked himself as often, and at last took another run, and went slowly and gravely down the slide, with his feet about a yard and a quarter apart, amidst the gratified shouts of all the spectators.

"Keep the pot a-bilin', sir!" said Sam; and down went Wardle again, and then Mr. Pickwick, and then



"Pooh, pooh! Nonsense!" said Wardle, dragging off his skates with the impetuosity which characterized all his proceedings. "Here; I'll keep you company; come along!" And away went the good-tempered old fellow down the slide with a rapidity which came very close upon Mr. Weller, and beat the fat boy all to nothing.

Sam, and then Mr. Winkle, and then Mr. Bob Sawyer, and then the fat boy, and then Mr. Snodgrass, following closely upon each other's heels, and running after each other with as much eagerness as if all their future prospects in life depended on their expedition.

It was the most intensely interesting thing to observe the manner

in which Mr. Pickwick performed his share in the ceremony; to watch the torture of anxiety with which he viewed the person behind, gaining upon him at the imminent hazard of tripping him up; to see him gradually expend the painful force which he had put on at first, and turn slowly round on the slide, with his face toward the point from which he had started; to contemplate the playful smile which mantled on his face when he had accomplished the distance, and the eagerness with which he turned round when he had done so and ran after his predecessor: his black gaiters tripping pleasantly through the snow, and his eyes beaming cheerfulness and gladness through his spectacles. And when

he was knocked down (which happened upon the average every third round), it was the most invigorating sight that can possibly be imagined to behold him gather up his hat, gloves, and handkerchief with a glowing countenance, and resume his station in the rank with an ardour and enthusiasm that nothing could abate.

The sport was at its height, the sliding was at the quickest, the laughter was at the loudest, when a sharp, smart crack was heard. There was a quick rush toward the bank, a wild scream from the ladies, and a shout from Mr. Tupman. A large mass of ice disappeared; the water bubbled up over it; Mr. Pickwick's hat, gloves, and handkerchief were floating on the surface; and this was all of Mr. Pickwick that anybody could see.

Dismay and anguish were depicted on every countenance; the males turned pale, and the females fainted; Mr. Snodgrass and Mr. Winkle grasped each other by the hand, and gazed at the spot where their leader had gone down, with frenzied eagerness; while Mr. Tupman, by way of rendering the promptest assistance, and at the same time conveying to any persons who might be within hearing the clearest possible notion of the catastrophe, ran off



across the country at his utmost speed, screaming "Fire!" with all his might.

It was at this very moment, when old Wardle and Sam Weller were approaching the hole with cautious steps, and Mr. Benjamin Allen was holding a hurried consultation with Mr. Bob Sawyer on the advisability of bleeding the company generally, as an improving little bit of professional practice—it was at this very moment that a face, head, and shoulders emerged from beneath the water, and disclosed the features and spectacles of Mr. Pickwick.

"Keep yourself up for an instant—for only one instant!" bawled Mr. Snodgrass.

"Yes, do; let me implore you—for my sake!" roared Mr. Winkle, deeply affected. The adjuration was rather unnecessary—the probability being that if Mr. Pickwick had declined to keep himself up for anybody else's sake, it would have occurred to him that he might as well do so for his own.

"Do you feel the bottom there, old fellow?" said Wardle.

"Yes, certainly," replied Mr. Pickwick, wringing the water from his head and face, and gasping for breath. "I fell upon my back. I couldn't get on my feet at first."

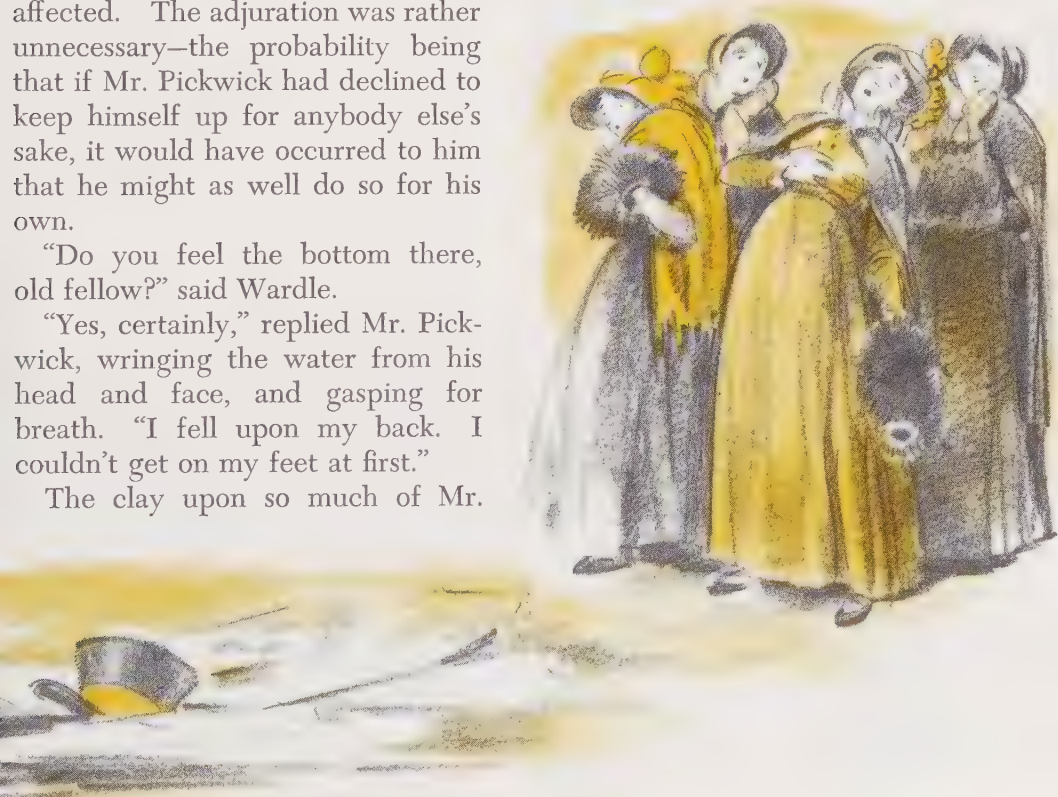
The clay upon so much of Mr.

Pickwick's coat as was yet visible bore testimony to the accuracy of this statement; and as the fears of the spectators were still further relieved by the fat boy's suddenly recollecting that the water was nowhere more than five feet deep, prodigies of valour were performed to get him out. After a vast quantity of splashing, and cracking, and struggling, Mr. Pickwick was at length fairly extricated from his unpleasant position, and once more stood on dry land.

"Oh, he'll catch his death of cold," said Emily.

"Dear old thing!" said Arabella. "Let me wrap this shawl round you, Mr. Pickwick."

"Ah, that's the best thing you can



do," said Wardle; "and when you've got it on, run home as fast as your legs can carry you, and jump into bed directly."

A dozen shawls were offered on the instant. Three or four of the thickest having been selected, Mr. Pickwick was wrapped up, and started off, under the guidance of Mr. Weller—presenting the singular phenomenon of an elderly gentleman, dripping wet, and without a hat, with his arms bound down to his sides, skimming over the ground, without any clearly defined purpose, at the rate of six good English miles an hour.

But Mr. Pickwick cared not for appearances in such an extreme case, and urged on by Sam Weller, he kept at the very top of his speed until he reached the door of Manor Farm, where Mr. Tupman had arrived some five minutes before, and had frightened the old lady into palpitations of the heart by impressing her with the unalterable convic-

tion that the kitchen chimney was on fire—a calamity which always presented itself in glowing colours to the old lady's mind when anybody about her evinced the smallest agitation.

Mr. Pickwick paused not an instant until he was snug in bed. Sam Weller lighted a blazing fire in the room, and took up his dinner; a bowl of punch was carried up afterward, and a grand carouse held in honour of his safety. Old Wardle would not hear of his rising, so they made the bed the chair, and Mr. Pickwick presided. A second and a third bowl were ordered in; and when Mr. Pickwick awoke next morning there was not a symptom of rheumatism about him; which proves, as Mr. Bob Sawyer very justly observed, that there is nothing like hot punch in such cases; and that if ever hot punch did fail to act as a preventive, it was merely because the patient fell into the vulgar error of not taking enough of it.



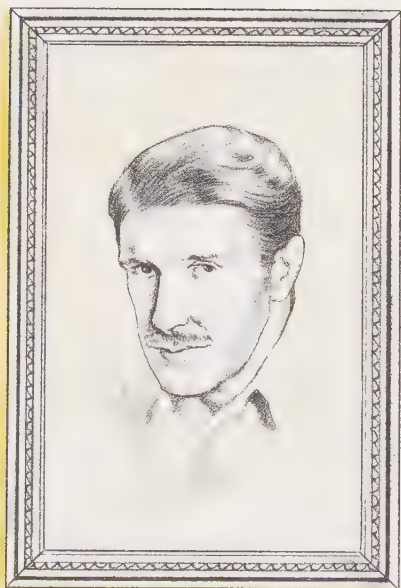
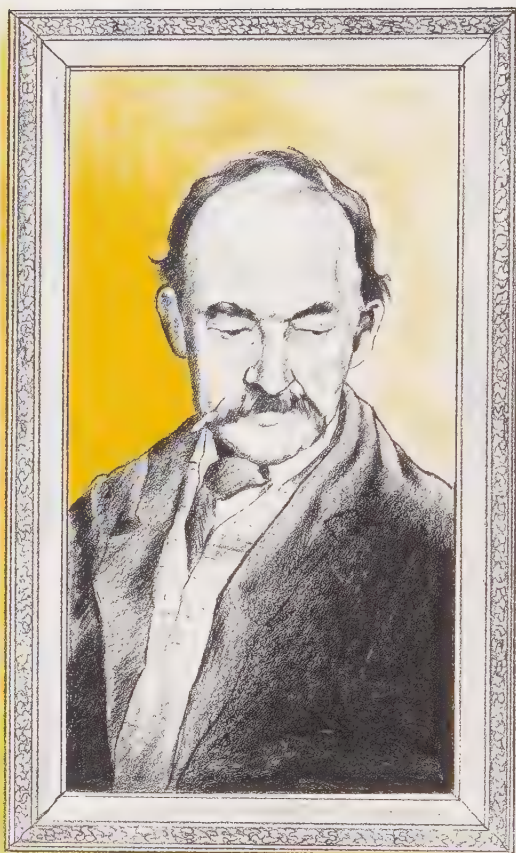
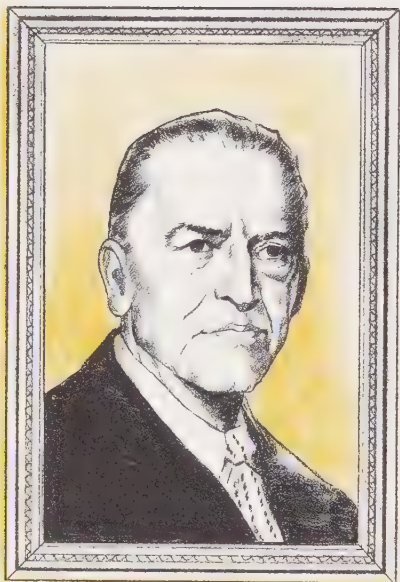
Discussion

1. Try to analyze the humor in this selection. Point out examples of humor provided by the plot, the characters, and Dickens' choice of words.
2. What does the selection reveal about English life in Dickens' day?
3. While the characters are types, they are also individuals. Point out the character and personality traits which distinguish the Messrs. Pickwick, Winkle, Sawyer, Wardle, and the servant Weller from each other.
4. On the basis of this selection, what would you say was the place of women in Dickens' day?
5. How do you account for the popularity of *Pickwick Papers*, both in Dickens' day and today?

Research

1. Several students might volunteer to read a chapter apiece from *Pickwick Papers* and through oral reports acquaint the class with additional adventures of the Pickwickians.
2. If you have not already read such famous books of Dickens' as *A Tale of Two Cities*, *David Copperfield*, or *Great Expectations*, now would be a good time to make up the deficiency.
3. After his first visit to America Dickens published his sharply critical *American Notes*. You might find it fun to look up this book and report some of Dickens' opinions to your classmates.
4. If you have literary ambitions, try rewriting this selection with modern setting and characters.





The Short Story



The short story, in the sense in which we think of it today, was the last of the literary types to appear in England. As we have seen, the prose narrative was of ancient origin, but as an artistic unit the short story developed in America before it did in England. W. Somerset Maugham, who has himself made a notable contribution to the modern short story, explains the late flowering of the type in England thus:

"The short story is not a form of fiction in which the English have on the whole excelled. The English, as their novels show, are inclined to diffuseness. They have never been much interested in form. Succinctness goes against their grain. But the short story demands form. It demands succinctness. Diffuseness kills it. It depends on construction. It does not admit of loose ends. It must be complete in itself."

As we have seen, Charles Dickens' *Pickwick Papers* introduced some of the characteristics of the short story. Dickens' friend and occasional collaborator, Wilkie Collins, wrote several stories, among them "A Terribly Strange Bed," which can be classified as true short stories. It is, however, as the originator of the mystery novel rather than as a short-story writer that Collins is remembered. Robert Louis Stevenson is generally credited with being the originator of the English short story.

If not solely due to Stevenson, the appearance of the short story in the last quarter of the nineteenth century was certainly given a strong impetus by him. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that as far as the general public was concerned, the short story sprang into

being full grown with the publication of "A Lodging for the Night" in 1877.

Stevenson was much impressed by the short-story form as it had been developed in America by Hawthorne and Poe and imitated in France by Maupassant. Stevenson's feeling for the importance of unity and total effect is indicated by his reply to a suggestion that he change the conclusion of one of his stories: "Make another end to it? Ah, yes, but that's not the way I write; the whole tale is implied. . . . To make another end, that is to make the beginning all wrong." It was Stevenson who gave the English prose narrative the artistic form which distinguishes a short story from a story that is merely short.

Thomas Hardy gave additional status to the new literary type with a considerable number of short stories, among them the notable *Wessex Tales*, published in 1888. Hardy's best stories are distinguished for their atmosphere, their superior characterization, and the inevitableness of their climaxes.

Rudyard Kipling, whom Maugham calls "our greatest story writer," increased the popularity of the English short story on both sides of the Atlantic with such volumes as his *Plain Tales from the Hills* and *Soldiers Three*, both published in 1888. The remoteness of his audience from the Indian settings and characters gave his stories a powerful romantic appeal. Indeed, not since Bret Harte had first written about the California mining camps eighteen years before, had local-color literature created such a sensation. Although Kipling ranged widely in his themes, he held rigidly to that singleness of effect which Poe had called the first essential of a good short story.

Joseph Conrad brought to the short

Katherine Mansfield

story a philosophical depth that had generally been lacking previously. The moral issues which provide the themes for his stories were made acceptable to even casual readers by Conrad's dramatic handling of the sea, his skill in describing exotic scenes, and the gripping adventures in which his characters were tested. Henry James, too, added depth to the new literary type. In his short stories, as in his novels, James was interested in the mental rather than the physical activities of his characters.

Maugham, once his reputation as a novelist was established, turned more and more to the short story, which he has always managed with great technical skill. Even when the chief interest of his stories is character, as in "The Verger," Maugham takes care to develop the character within the bounds of a tightly-woven plot. He has traveled widely and often gives his stories romantic settings. Maugham's sophisticated and somewhat cynical outlook on life, now perhaps a little dated, seems to have satisfied some sense of disillusionment among English-reading people in the period between the two world wars.

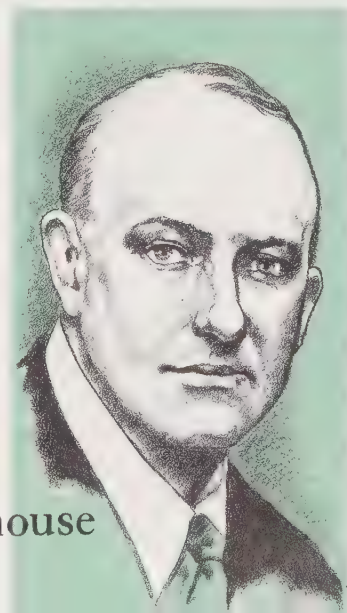
Besides Maugham, whose writing career has spanned half a century, important writers of short stories of modern times include Katherine Mansfield, who wrote character studies of gripping realism, often dealing with the cruelties of class distinction; H. H. Munro, who, under the pen name of "Saki," wrote witty, sometimes satirical stories of the conflict between children and adults; and P. G. Wodehouse, the durable writer of humorous stories in British slang and the creator of Jeeves, the perfect gentleman's gentleman.

The trend in the English short story



today is toward greater deliberateness in plot development and characterization. Eric Knight's story of Anglo-American relations, "All Yankees Are Liars," is an illustration of this trend. Knight's life alternated between England and the United States, and many of his stories reflect a dual viewpoint.

Although the short story developed late in England, it gained status quickly because of the distinguished writers in other areas of literature who turned their talents to the new medium. The short story is now a well-established branch of English literature.



P. G. Wodehouse

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, where his father was a civil engineer specializing in the construction of lighthouses. At the age of eight Stevenson suffered from a gastric fever which permanently weakened his health and probably laid him open to the later contraction of tuberculosis.

Stevenson studied engineering and, later, law, but by the time he was twenty-five he had dropped both for the pursuit of literature. He worked hard to perfect a style, as so many writers before and since have done, by imitating great writers. His first attempts were in the essay form, and by the time he turned to fiction he had the English language completely in his command.

All his life Stevenson liked to travel, and his first books were accounts of his journeyings in Belgium and France. It was in France, in 1876, that he met the American Mrs. Osbourne, whom he married four years later in California. After a honeymoon in the Sierras, Stevenson took his wife and stepson to Scotland. The damp climate did not agree with him, however, and after several nearly fatal illnesses, Stevenson brought his family to the United States in 1887.

A year later the Stevensons sailed from San Francisco for the South Pacific. After two years of cruising among the islands, they settled on Samoa. Stevenson won the devotion of the Samoans, who called him *Tusitala*, or Teller of Tales, and honored him as a chieftain.

Stevenson was a pioneer in the modern English short story. Indeed, many critics date its origin to the publication in 1877 of Stevenson's "A Lodging for the Night." He had become interested in the short story in France, where a young man of his own age, Guy de Maupassant, was perfecting the form along lines established by Edgar Allan Poe. Like Nathaniel Hawthorne, Stevenson was interested in moral problems, and many of his stories have both a literal and a symbolic meaning. While there is often stark horror in Stevenson's stories, he was not satisfied, as Poe had been, with emotional effect alone.

"Markheim" is generally considered Stevenson's best short story, and it ranks as one of the great short stories in English literature. It illustrates well Stevenson's individual combination of romantic setting and plot and realistic details. It illustrates, too, his effective use of figures of speech. "Markheim" is from *The Merry Men and Other Tales and Fables*, published in 1887.

(For additional biographical details see page 270.)



ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON 1850–1894

Markheim

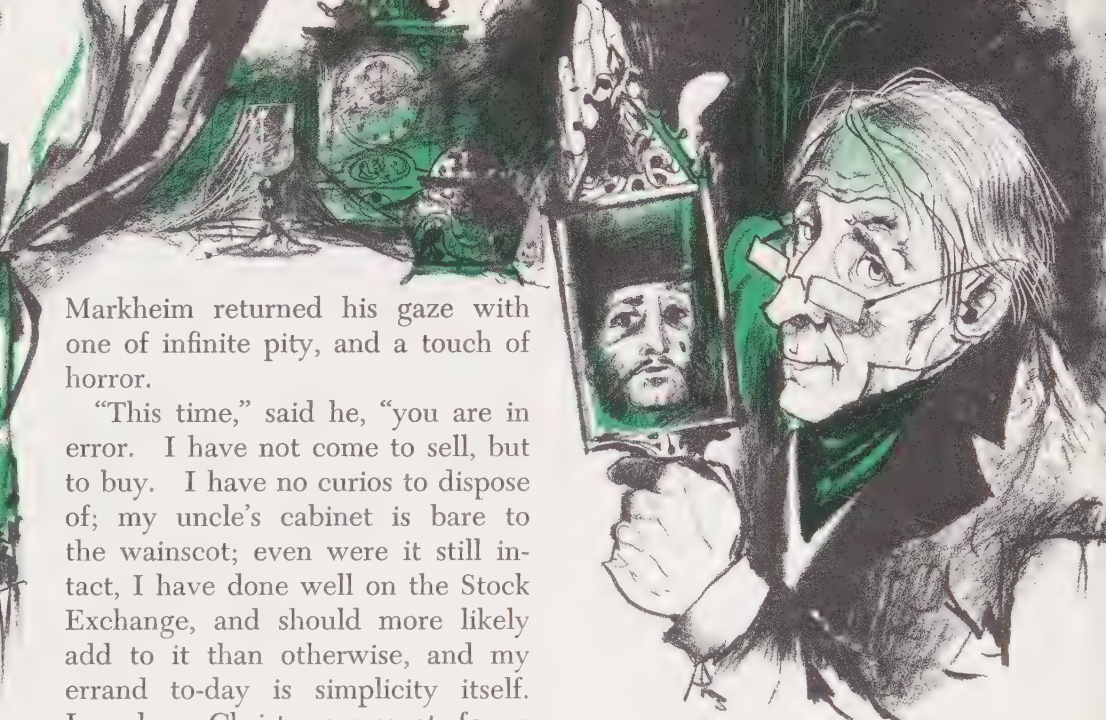
"YES," said the dealer, "our wind-falls are of various kinds. Some customers are ignorant, and then I touch a dividend on my superior knowledge. Some are dishonest," and here he held up the candle, so that the light fell strongly on his visitor, "and in that case," he continued, "I profit by my virtue."

Markheim had but just entered from the daylight streets, and his eyes had not yet grown familiar with the mingled shine and darkness in the shop. At these pointed words, and before the near presence of the flame, he blinked painfully and looked aside.

The dealer chuckled. "You come to me on Christmas Day," he resumed, "when you know that I am alone in my house, put up my shutters, and make a point of refusing business. Well, you will have to pay for that; you will have to pay for my loss of time, when I should be balancing my books; you will have to pay, besides, for a kind of manner

that I remark in you today, very strongly. I am the essence of discretion, and ask no awkward questions; but when a customer can not look me in the eye, he has to pay for it." The dealer once more chuckled; and then, changing to his usual business voice, though still with a note of irony, "You can give, as usual, a clean account of how you came into the possession of the object?" he continued. "Still your uncle's cabinet? A remarkable collector, sir!"

And the little, pale, round-shouldered dealer stood almost on tip-toe, looking over the top of his gold spectacles, and nodding his head with every mark of disbelief.



Markheim returned his gaze with one of infinite pity, and a touch of horror.

"This time," said he, "you are in error. I have not come to sell, but to buy. I have no curios to dispose of; my uncle's cabinet is bare to the wainscot; even were it still intact, I have done well on the Stock Exchange, and should more likely add to it than otherwise, and my errand to-day is simplicity itself. I seek a Christmas-present for a lady," he continued, waxing more fluent as he struck into the speech he had prepared; "and certainly I owe you every excuse for thus disturbing you upon so small a matter. But the thing was neglected yesterday; I must produce my little compliment at dinner; and, as you very well know, a rich marriage is not a thing to be neglected."

There followed a pause, during which the dealer seemed to weigh this statement incredulously. The ticking of many clocks among the curious lumber of the shop, and the faint rushing of the cabs in a near thoroughfare, filled up the interval of silence.

"Well, sir," said the dealer, "be it so. You are an old customer after all; and if, as you say, you have the chance of a good marriage, far be it

from me to be an obstacle. Here is a nice thing for a lady, now," he went on, "this hand glass—fifteenth-century, warranted; comes from a good collection, too; but I reserve the name, in the interests of my customer, who was just like yourself, my dear sir, the nephew and sole heir of a remarkable collector."

The dealer, while he thus ran on in his dry and biting voice, had stooped to take the object from its place; and, as he had done so, a shock had passed through Markheim, a start both of hand and foot, a sudden leap of many tumultuous passions to the face. It passed as swiftly as it came, and left no trace beyond a certain trembling of the hand that now received the glass.

"A glass," he said hoarsely, and then paused, and repeated it more

clearly. "A glass? For Christmas? Surely not."

"And why not?" cried the dealer. "Why not a glass?"

Markheim was looking upon him with an indefinable expression. "You ask me why not?" he said. "Why, look here—look in it—look at yourself! Do you like to see it? No! nor I—nor any man."

The little man had jumped back when Markheim had so suddenly confronted him with the mirror; but now, perceiving there was nothing worse on hand, he chuckled. "Your future lady, sir, must be pretty hard-favored," said he.

"I ask you," said Markheim, "for a Christmas present, and you give me this—this damned reminder of years and sins and follies—this hand conscience! Did you mean it? Had you a thought in your mind? Tell me. It will be better for you if you do. Come, tell me about yourself. I hazard a guess now, that you are in secret a very charitable man?"

The dealer looked closely at his companion. It was very odd, Markheim did not appear to be laughing; there was something in his face like an eager sparkle of hope, but nothing of mirth.

"What are you driving at?" the dealer asked.

"Not charitable?" returned the other, gloomily. "Not charitable; not pious; nor scrupulous; unloving; unbeloved; a hand to get money, a safe to keep it. Is that all? Is that all, man, is that all?"

"I will tell you what it is," began the dealer, with some sharpness, and then broke off again into a chuckle. "But I see this is a love match of yours, and you have been drinking the lady's health."

"Ah!" cried Markheim, with a strange curiosity. "Ah, have you been in love? Tell me about that."

"I!" cried the dealer. "I in love! I never had the time, nor have I the time today for all this nonsense. Will you take the glass?"

"Where is the hurry?" returned Markheim. "It is very pleasant to stand here talking; and life is so short and insecure that I would not hurry away from any pleasure—no, not even from so mild a one as this. We should rather cling, cling to what little we can get, like a man at a cliff's edge. Every second is a cliff, if you think upon it—a cliff a mile high—high enough, if we fall, to dash us out of every feature of humanity. Hence it is best to talk pleasantly. Let us talk of each other; why should we wear this mask? Let us be confidential. Who knows, we might become friends."

"I have just one word to say to you," said the dealer. "Either make your purchase, or walk out of my shop."

"True, true," said Markheim. "Enough fooling. To business. Show me something else."

The dealer stooped once more, this time to replace the glass upon the shelf, his thin blond hair falling

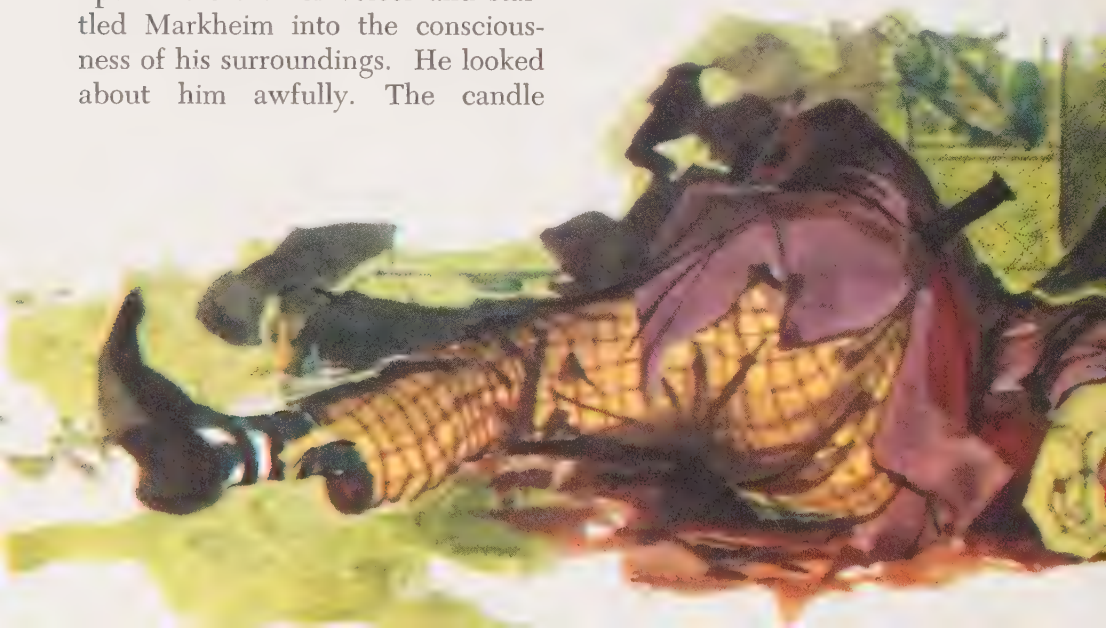
over his eyes as he did so. Markheim moved a little nearer, with one hand in the pocket of his greatcoat; he drew himself up and filled his lungs; at the same time many different emotions were depicted together on his face—terror, horror, and resolve, fascination and a physical repulsion; and through a haggard lift of his upper lip, his teeth looked out.

"This, perhaps, may suit," observed the dealer; and then, as he began to rearise, Markheim bounded from behind upon his victim. The long, skewerlike dagger flashed and fell. The dealer struggled like a hen, striking his temple on the shelf, and then tumbled on the floor in a heap.

Time had some score of small voices in that shop, some stately and slow as was becoming to their great age; others garrulous and hurried. All these told out the seconds in an intricate chorus of tickings. Then the passage of a lad's feet, heavily running on the pavement, broke in upon these smaller voices and startled Markheim into the consciousness of his surroundings. He looked about him awfully. The candle

stood on the counter, its flame solemnly wagging in a draught; and by that inconsiderable movement, the whole room was filled with noiseless bustle and kept heaving like a sea: the tall shadows nodding, the gross blots of darkness swelling and dwindling as with respiration, the faces of the portraits and the china gods changing and wavering like images in water. The inner door stood ajar, and peered into that leaguer of shadows with a long slit of daylight like a pointing finger.

From these fear-stricken roving, Markheim's eyes returned to the body of his victim, where it lay both humped and sprawling, incredibly small and strangely meaner than in life. In these poor, miserly clothes, in that ungainly attitude, the dealer lay like so much sawdust. Markheim had feared to see it, and, lo! it was nothing. And yet, as he gazed, this bundle of old clothes and pool of blood began to find eloquent voices.



There it must lie; there was none to work the cunning hinges or direct the miracle of locomotion—there it must lie till it was found. Found! ay, and then? Then would this dead flesh lift up a cry that would ring over England, and fill the world with the echoes of pursuit. Ay, dead or not, this was still the enemy. “Time was that when the brains were out,”¹ he thought; and the first word struck into his mind. Time, now that the deed was accomplished—time, which had closed for the victim, had become instant and momentous for the slayer.

¹Markheim has evidently read *Macbeth*. In Act III, Scene iv (page 754), Macbeth says, “The time has been, that, when the brains were out, the man would die, and there an end.”



The thought was yet in his mind, when, first one and then another, with every variety of pace and voice—one deep as the bell from a cathedral turret, another ringing on its treble notes the prelude of a waltz—the clocks began to strike the hour of three in the afternoon.

The sudden outbreak of so many tongues in that dumb chamber staggered him. He began to bestir himself, going to and fro with the candle, beleaguered by moving shadows, and startled to the soul by chance reflections. In many rich mirrors, some of home designs, some from Venice or Amsterdam, he saw his face repeated and repeated, as it were an army of spies; his own eyes met and detected him; and the sound of his own steps, lightly as they fell, vexed the surrounding quiet. And still as he continued to fill his pockets, his mind accused him, with a sickening iteration, of the thousand faults of his design. He should have chosen a more quiet hour; he should have prepared an alibi; he should not have used a knife; he should have been more cautious, and only bound and gagged the dealer, and not killed him; he should have been more bold, and killed the servant also; he should have done all things otherwise; poignant regrets, weary, incessant toiling of the mind to change what was unchangeable, to plan what was now useless, to be the architect of the irrevocable past. Meanwhile, and behind all this activity, brute terrors, like scurrying of

rats in a deserted attic, filled the more remote chambers of his brain with riot; the hand of the constable would fall heavy on his shoulder, and his nerves would jerk like a hooked fish; or he beheld, in galloping de-



file, the dock, the prison, the gallows, and the black coffin.

Terror of the people in the street sat down before his mind like a besieging army. It was impossible, he thought, but that some rumor of the struggle must have reached their ears and set on edge their curiosity; and now, in all the neighboring houses, he divined them sitting motionless and with uplifted ear—prying and hearkening and weaving the rope that was to hang him. Sometimes it seemed to him he could not move too softly; the clink of the tall

Bohemian goblets rang out loudly like a bell; and alarmed by the bigness of the ticking, he was tempted to stop the clocks. And then, again, with a swift transition of his terrors, the very silence of the place ap-



peared a source of peril, and a thing to strike and freeze the passer-by; and he would step more boldly, and bustle aloud among the contents of the shop, and imitate, with elaborate bravado, the movements of a busy man at ease in his own house.

But he was now so pulled about by the different alarms that, while one portion of his mind was still alert and cunning, another trembled on the brink of lunacy. One hallucination in particular took a strong hold on his credulity. The neighbor hearkening with white face be-

side his window, the passer-by arrested by a horrible surmise on the pavement—these could at worst suspect, they could not know; through the brick walls and shuttered windows only sounds could penetrate. But here within the house, was he alone? He knew he was; he had watched the servant set forth sweethearting in her poor best, “out for the day” written in every ribbon and smile. Yes, he was alone, of course; and yet, in the bulk of empty house above him, he could surely hear a stir of delicate footing—he was surely conscious, inexplicably conscious of some presence. Ay, surely; to every room and corner of the house his imagination followed it; and now it was a faceless thing, and yet had eyes to see with; and again it was a shadow of himself; and yet again behold the image of the dead dealer, reinspired with cunning and hatred.

At times, with a strong effort, he would glance at the open door which still seemed to repel his eyes. The house was tall, the skylight small and dirty, the day blind with fog; and the light that filtered down to the ground story was exceedingly faint, and showed dimly on the threshold of the shop. And yet, in that strip of doubtful brightness, did there not hang wavering a shadow?

Suddenly, from the street outside, a very jovial gentleman began to beat with a staff on the shop-door, accompanying his blows with shouts and railleries in which the dealer

was continually called upon by name. Markheim, smitten into ice, glanced at the dead man. But no! he lay quite still; he was fled away far beyond earshot of these blows and shoutings; he was sunk beneath seas of silence; and his name, which would once have caught his notice above the howling of a storm, had become an empty sound. And presently the jovial gentleman desisted from his knocking and departed.

Here was a broad hint to hurry what remained to be done, to get forth from this accusing neighborhood, to plunge into a bath of London multitudes, and to reach, on the other side of day, that haven of safety and apparent innocence—his bed. One visitor had come: at any moment another might follow and be more obstinate. To have done the deed, and yet not to reap the profit, would be too abhorrent a failure. The money, that was now Markheim's concern; and as a means to that, the keys.

He glanced over his shoulder at the open door, where the shadow was still lingering and shivering; and with no conscious repugnance of the mind, yet with a tremor of the belly, he drew near the body of his victim. The human character had quite departed. Like a suit half-stuffed with bran, the limbs lay scattered, the trunk doubled, on the floor; and yet the thing repelled him. Although so dingy and inconsiderable to the eye, he feared it might

have more significance to the touch. He took the body by the shoulders, and turned it on its back. It was strangely light and supple, and the limbs, as if they had been broken, fell into the oddest postures. The face was robbed of all expression; but it was as pale as wax, and



shockingly smeared with blood about one temple. That was, for Markheim, the one displeasing circumstance. It carried him back, upon the instant, to a certain fair day in a fishers' village: a grey day, a piping wind, a crowd upon the street, the blare of brasses, the



booming of drums, the nasal voice of a ballad singer; and a boy going to and fro, buried over head in the crowd and divided between interest and fear, until, coming out upon the chief place of concourse, he beheld a booth and a great screen with pictures, dismally designed, garishly colored: Brownrigg with her apprentice; the Mannings with their murdered guest; Weare in the death grip of Thurtell; and a score besides of famous crimes. The thing was as clear as an illusion; he was once again that little boy; he was looking once again, and with the same sense of physical revolt, at these vile pictures; he was still stunned by the thumping of the drums. A bar of that day's music returned upon his memory; and at that, for the first time, a qualm came over him, a breath of nausea, a sudden weakness of the joints, which he must instantly resist and conquer.

He judged it more prudent to confront than to flee from these considerations; looking the more hardily in the dead face, bending his mind to realize the nature and greatness of his crime. So little a while ago that face had moved with every change of sentiment, that pale mouth had spoken, that body had been all on fire with governable energies; and now, and by his act, that piece of life had been arrested, as the horologist, with interjected finger, arrests the beating of the clock. So he reasoned in vain; he could rise to no more remorseful consciousness.

At best, he felt a gleam of pity for one who had been endowed in vain with all those faculties that can make the world a garden of enchantment, one who had never lived and who was now dead. But of penitence, no, not a tremor.

With that, shaking himself clear of these considerations, he found the keys and advanced towards the open door of the shop. Outside, it had begun to rain smartly; and the sound of the shower upon the roof had banished silence. Like some dripping cavern, the chambers of the house were haunted by an incessant echoing, which filled the ear and mingled with the ticking of the clocks. And, as Markheim approached the door, he seemed to hear, in answer to his own cautious tread, the steps of another foot withdrawing up the stair. The shadow still palpitated loosely on the threshold. He threw a ton's weight of resolve upon his muscles, and drew back the door.

The faint, foggy daylight glimmered dimly on the bare floor and stairs; on the bright suit of armor posted, halbert in hand, upon the landing; and on the dark wood-carvings, and framed pictures that hung against the yellow panels of the wainscot. So loud was the beating of the rain through all the house that, in Markheim's ears, it began to be distinguished into many different sounds. Footsteps and sighs, the tread of regiments marching in the distance, the chink of money in the

counting, and the creaking of doors held stealthily ajar, appeared to mingle with the patter of the drops upon the cupola and the gushing of the water in the pipes. The sense that he was not alone grew upon him to the verge of madness. On every side he was haunted and begirt by presences. He heard them moving in the upper chambers; from the shop, he heard the dead man getting to his legs; and as he began with a great effort to mount the stairs, feet fled quietly before him and followed stealthily behind. If he were but deaf, he thought, how tranquilly he would possess his soul. And then again, and hearkening with every fresh attention, he blessed himself for that unresisting sense which held the outposts and stood a trusty sentinel upon his life. His head turned continually on his neck; his eyes, which seemed starting from their orbits, scouted on every side, and on every side were half-rewarded as with the tail of something nameless vanishing. The four-and-twenty steps to the first floor were four-and-twenty agonies.

On that first story the doors stood ajar, three of them like three ambushes, shaking his nerves like the throats of cannon. He could never again, he felt, be sufficiently immured and fortified from men's observing eyes; he longed to be home, girt in by walls, buried among bed-clothes, and invisible to all but God. And at that thought he wondered a little, recollecting tales of other mur-

derers and the fear they were said to entertain of heavenly avengers. It was not so, at least, with him. He feared the laws of nature, lest, in their callous and immutable procedure, they should preserve some damning evidence of his crime. He feared tenfold more, with a slavish, superstitious terror, some scission in the continuity of man's experience, some willful illegality of nature. He played a game of skill, depending on the rules, calculating consequence from cause; and what if nature, as the defeated tyrant overthrew the chessboard, should break the mould of their succession? The like had befallen Napoleon (so writers said) when the winter changed the time of its appearance. The like might befall Markheim: the solid walls might become transparent and reveal his doings like those of bees in a glass hive; the stout planks might yield under his foot like quicksands and detain him in their clutch; ay, and there were soberer accidents that might destroy him: if, for instance, the house should fall and imprison him beside the body of his victim; or the house next door should fly on fire, and the firemen invade him from all sides. These things he feared; and, in a sense, these things might be called the hands of God reached forth against sin. But about God himself he was at ease; his act was doubtless exceptional, but so were his excuses, which God knew; it was there, and not among men, that he felt sure of justice.

When he had got safe into the drawing room, and shut the door behind him, he was aware of a respite from alarms. The room was quite dismantled, uncarpeted besides, and strewn with packing cases and incongruous furniture; several great pier glasses, in which he beheld himself at various angles, like an actor on a stage; many pictures, framed and unframed, standing, with their faces to the wall; a fine Sheraton sideboard, a cabinet of marquetry, and a great old bed, with tapestry hangings. The windows opened to the floor; but by great good fortune the lower part of the shutters had been closed, and this concealed him from the neighbors. Here, then, Markheim drew in a packing case before the cabinet, and began to search among the keys. It was a long business, for there were many; and it was irksome, besides; for, after all, there might be nothing in the cabinet, and time was on the wing. But the closeness of the occupation sobered him. With the tail of his eye he saw the door—even glanced at it from time to time directly, like a besieged commander pleased to verify the good estate of his defences. But in truth he was at peace. The rain falling in the street sounded natural and pleasant. Presently, on the other side, the notes of a piano were wakened to the music of a hymn, and the voices of many children took up the air and words. How stately, how comfortable was the melody! How fresh the youthful



voices! Markheim gave ear to it smilingly, as he sorted out the keys; and his mind was thronged with answerable ideas and images; church-going children and the pealing of the high organ; children afield, bathers by the brookside, ramblers on the brambly common, kiteflyers in the windy and cloud-navigated sky; and then, at another cadence of the hymn, back again to church, and the somnolence of summer Sundays, and

the high, genteel voice of the parson.

And as he sat thus, at once busy and absent, he was startled to his feet. A flash of ice, a flash of fire, a bursting gush of blood, went over him, and then he stood transfixed and thrilling. A step mounted the stair slowly and steadily, and presently a hand was laid upon the knob, and the lock clicked, and the door opened.

Fear held Markheim in a vice. What to expect he knew not, whether the dead man walking, or the official ministers of human justice, or some chance witness blindly stumbling in to consign him to the gallows. But when a face was thrust into the aperture, glanced round the room, looked at him, nodded and smiled as if in friendly recognition, and then withdrew again, and the door closed behind it, his fear broke loose from his control in a hoarse cry. At the sound of this the visitant returned.

"Did you call me?" he asked, pleasantly, and with that he entered the room and closed the door behind him.

Markheim stood and gazed at him with all his eyes. Perhaps there was a film upon his sight, but the outlines of the newcomer seemed to change and waver like those of the idols in the wavering candlelight of the shop; and at times he thought he knew him; and at times he thought he bore a likeness to himself; and always, like a lump of living terror, there lay in his bosom the convic-

tion that this thing was not of the earth and not of God.

And yet the creature had a strange air of the commonplace, as he stood looking on Markheim with a smile; and when he added: "You are looking for the money, I believe?" it was in the tones of everyday politeness.

Markheim made no answer.

"I should warn you," resumed the other, "that the maid has left her sweetheart earlier than usual and will soon be here. If Mr. Markheim be found in this house, I need not describe to him the consequences."

"You know me?" cried the murderer.

The visitor smiled. "You have long been a favorite of mine," he said: "and I have long observed and often sought to help you."

"What are you?" cried Markheim: "the devil?"

"What I may be," returned the other, "can not affect the service I propose to render you."

"It can," cried Markheim; "it does! Be helped by you? No, never; not by you! You do not know me yet, thank God, you do not know me!"

"I know you," replied the visitant, with a sort of kind severity or rather firmness. "I know you to the soul."

"Know me!" cried Markheim. "Who can do so? My life is but a travesty and slander on myself. I have lived to belie my nature. All men do; all men are better than this disguise that grows about and stifles them. You see each dragged away



by life, like one whom bravos have seized and muffled in a cloak. If they had their own control—if you could see their faces, they would be altogether different, they would shine out for heroes and saints! I am worse than most; my self is more overlaid; my excuse is known to me and God. But, had I the time, I could disclose myself."

"To me?" inquired the visitant.

"To you before all," returned the murderer. "I supposed you were intelligent. I thought—since you exist—you would prove a reader of the heart. And yet you would propose to judge me by my acts! Think of it; my acts! I was born and I have lived in a land of giants; giants have dragged me by the wrists since I was born out of my mother—the giants of circumstance.

And you would judge me by my acts! But can you not look within? Can you not understand that evil is hateful to me? Can you not see within me the clear writing of conscience, never blurred by any willful sophistry although too often disregarded? Can you not read me for a thing that surely must be common as humanity—the unwilling sinner?”

“All this is very feelingly expressed,” was the reply, “but it regards me not. These points of consistency are beyond my province, and I care not in the least by what compulsion you may have been dragged away, so as you are but carried in the right direction. But time flies; the servant delays, looking in the faces of the crowd and at the pictures on the hoardings, but still she keeps moving nearer; and remember, it is as if the gallows itself were striding toward you through the Christmas streets! Shall I help you—I, who know all? Shall I tell you where to find the money?”

“For what price?” asked Markheim.

“I offer you the service for a Christmas gift,” returned the other.

Markheim could not refrain from smiling with a kind of bitter triumph. “No,” said he, “I will take nothing at your hands; if I were dying of thirst, and it was your hand that put the pitcher to my lips, I should find the courage to refuse. I may be credulous, but I will do nothing to commit myself to evil.”

“I have no objection to a death-

bed repentance,” observed the visitant.

“Because you disbelieve their efficacy!” Markheim cried.

“I do not say so,” returned the other; “but I look on these things from a different side, and when the life is done my interest falls. The man has lived to serve me, to spread black looks under color of religion, or to sow tares in the wheat field, as you do, in a course of weak compliance with desire. Now that he draws so near to his deliverance, he can add but one act of service—to repent, to die smiling, and thus to build up in confidence and hope the more timorous of my surviving followers. I am not so hard a master. Try me. Accept my help. Please yourself in life as you have done hitherto; please yourself more amply, spread your elbows at the board; and when the night begins to fall and the curtains to be drawn, I tell you, for your greater comfort, that you will find it even easy to compound your quarrel with your conscience, and to make a truckling peace with God. I came but now from such a deathbed, and the room was full of sincere mourners, listening to the man’s last words; and when I looked into that face, which had been set as a flint against mercy, I found it smiling with hope.”

“And do you, then, suppose me such a creature?” asked Markheim. “Do you think I have no more generous aspirations than to sin, and sin, and sin, and, at last, sneak into

heaven? My heart rises at the thought. Is this, then, your experience of mankind? or is it because you find me with red hands that you presume such baseness? and is this crime of murder indeed so impious as to dry up the very springs of good?"

"Murder has to me no special category," replied the other. "All sins are murder, even as all life is war. I behold your race, like starving mariners on a raft, plucking crusts out of the hands of famine and feeding on each other's lives. I follow sins beyond the moment of their acting; I find in all that the last consequence is death; and to my eyes, the pretty maid who thwarts her mother with such taking graces on a question of a ball, drips no less visibly with human gore than such a murderer as yourself. Do I say that I follow sins? I follow virtues also; they differ not by the thickness of a nail, they are both scythes for the reaping angel of Death. Evil, for which I live, consists not in action but in character. The bad man is dear to me; not the bad act, whose fruits, if we could follow them far enough down the hurtling cataract of the ages, might yet be found more blessed than those of the rarest virtues. And it is not because you have killed a dealer, but because you are Markheim, that I offered to forward your escape."

"I will lay my heart open to you," answered Markheim. "This crime on which you find me is my last.

On my way to it I have learned many lessons; itself is a lesson, a momentous lesson. Hitherto I have been driven with revolt to what I would not; I was a bond-slave to poverty, driven and scourged. There are robust virtues that can stand in these temptations; mine was not so: I had a thirst of pleasure. But today, and out of this deed, I pluck both warning and riches—both the power and a fresh resolve to be myself. I become in all things a free actor in the world; I begin to see myself all changed, these hands the agents of good, this heart at peace. Something comes over me out of the past; something of what I have dreamed on Sabbath evenings to the sound of the church organ, of what I forecast when I shed tears over noble books, or talked, an innocent child, with my mother. There lies my life; I have wandered a few years, but now I see once more my city of destination."

"You are to use this money on the Stock Exchange, I think?" remarked the visitor; "and there, if I mistake not, you have already lost some thousands?"

"Ah," said Markheim, "but this time I have a sure thing."

"This time, again, you will lose," replied the visitor, quietly.

"Ah, but I keep back the half!" cried Markheim.

"That also you will lose," said the other.

The sweat started upon Markheim's brow. "Well, then, what



matter?" he exclaimed. "Say it be lost, say I am plunged again in poverty, shall one part of me, and that the worse, continue until the end to override the better? Evil and good run strong in me, haling me both ways. I do not love the one thing, I love all. I can conceive great deeds, renunciations, martyrdoms; and though I be fallen to such a crime as murder, pity is no stranger to my thoughts. I pity the poor; who knows their trials better than myself? I pity and help them; I prize love, I love honest laughter; there is no good thing nor true thing on earth but I love it from my heart. And are my vices only to direct my life, and my virtues to lie without effect, like some passive lumber of the mind? Not so; good, also, is a spring of acts."

But the visitant raised his finger. "For six-and-thirty years that you have been in this world," said he, "through many changes of fortune and varieties of humor, I have watched you steadily fall. Fifteen years ago you would have started at

a theft. Three years back you would have blenched at the name of murder. Is there any crime, is there any cruelty or meanness, from which you still recoil?—five years from now I shall detect you in the fact! Downward, downward, lies your way; nor can anything but death avail to stop you."

"It is true," Markheim said, huskily, "I have in some degree complied with evil. But it is so with all: the very saints, in the mere exercise of living, grow less dainty, and take on the tone of their surroundings."

"I will propound to you one simple question," said the other; "and as you answer, I shall read to you your moral horoscope. You have grown in many things more lax; possibly you do right to be so; and at any account, it is the same with all men. But granting that, are you in any one particular, however trifling, more difficult to please with your own conduct, or do you go in all things with a looser rein?"

"In any one?" repeated Markheim, with an anguish of consideration. "No," he added, with despair, "in none! I have gone down in all."

"Then," said the visitor, "content yourself with what you are, for you will never change; and the words of your part on this stage are irrevocably written down."

Markheim stood for a long while silent, and indeed it was the visitor who first broke the silence. "That being so," he said, "shall I show you the money?"

"And grace?" cried Markheim.

"Have you not tried it?" returned the other. "Two or three years ago, did I not see you on the platform of revival meetings, and was not your voice the loudest in the hymn?"

"It is true," said Markheim; "and I see clearly what remains for me by way of duty. I thank you for these lessons from my soul; my eyes are opened, and I behold myself at last for what I am."

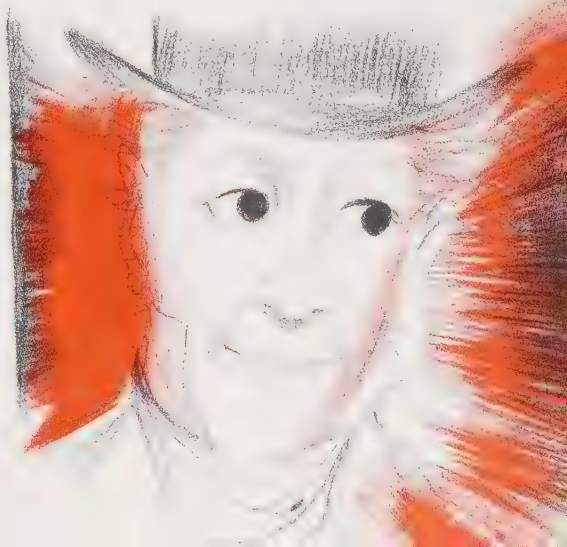
At this moment, the sharp note of the doorbell rang through the house; and the visitant, as though this were some concerted signal for which he had been waiting changed at once in his demeanor.

"The maid!" he cried. "She has returned, as I forewarned you, and there is now before you one more difficult passage. Her master, you must say, is ill; you must let her in, with an assured but rather serious countenance—no smiles, no overacting, and I promise you success! Once the girl within, and the door closed, the same dexterity that has already rid you of the dealer will relieve you of this last danger in your path. Thenceforward you have the whole evening—the whole night, if needful—to ransack the treasures of the house and to make good your safety. This is help that comes to you with the mask of danger. Up!" he cried, "up, friend; your life hangs trembling in the scales; up, and act!"

Markheim steadily regarded his counselor. "If I be condemned to evil acts," he said, "there is still one

door of freedom open—I can cease from action. If my life be an ill thing, I can lay it down. Though I be, as you say truly, at the beck of every small temptation, I can yet, by one decisive gesture, place myself beyond the reach of all. My love of good is damned to barrenness; it may, and let it be! But I have still my hatred of evil; and from that, to your galling disappointment, you shall see that I can draw both energy and courage."

The features of the visitor began to undergo a wonderful and lovely change: they brightened and softened with a tender triumph; and, even as they brightened, faded and dislimned. But Markheim did not pause to watch or understand the transformation. He opened the door and went downstairs very slowly, thinking to himself. His past went soberly before him; he beheld it as it was, ugly and strenuous like a dream, random as chance medley—a scene of defeat. Life, as he thus reviewed it, tempted him no longer; but on the farther side he





perceived a quiet haven for his bark. He paused in the passage, and looked into the shop, where the candle still burned by the dead body. It was strangely silent. Thoughts of the dealer swarmed into his mind, as he stood gazing. And then the bell once more broke out into impatient clamor.

He confronted the maid upon the threshold with something like a smile.


"You had better go for the police," said he: "I have killed your master."

Discussion

1. Why do you think Stevenson made Markheim's victim the sort of person he did?
2. What new significance does the incident of the mirror take on when you view the story as a whole?
3. In what sense can the setting be said to be an actor in the story?
4. What has Markheim's past life been like? How does he justify it?
5. Critics generally agree the stranger is neither the devil nor Christ. What, then, does he represent? Why does he seem "blurred"?
6. Does the story, on the whole, make you feel encouraged or discouraged about human nature?

Research

1. If you are interested in the psychology of morals, you can explore the subject further in Stevenson's novel, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.
2. Some short stories by Stevenson that you will be likely to enjoy are "The Sire de Malétoit's Door," "The Bottle Imp," and "A Lodging for the Night."
3. You might write a worthwhile essay comparing this story to Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart." What similarities do you note? What differences? Which story is the more thought-provoking?



THOMAS HARDY was born in Upper Bockhampton, near Dorchester, in southwestern England, in a house that must have been much like the one described in "The Three Strangers." He attended school locally and then was apprenticed to an architect in Dorchester. In 1861 he went to London to continue his studies. When he was twenty-three he won a prize for architectural design, and for the next five years he worked as an architect in London.

Hardy began his writing career as a poet, but being unable to find a publisher, he turned to fiction. His first short story was published in 1865. Six years later his first novel appeared. It was followed by more short stories and then the series of novels which rank Hardy among the great novelists of the world. Between 1871 and 1895 he published the fourteen novels which have given literary immortality to the country people of Dorsetshire, for which Hardy revived the ancient name of Wessex. Most famous of the novels are *Far from the Madding Crowd*, 1874; *The Return of the Native*, 1878; *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, 1886; *The Woodlanders*, 1887; *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, 1891; and *Jude the Obscure*, 1895.

Hardy's characters, drawn with great realism, are simple, usually uneducated men and women, struggling for a livelihood and a measure of self-development against the irresistible, almost evil, forces of nature. The greatness of Hardy's stories lies in their symbolic value for the reader. Without Hardy's pointing it out, readers inevitably draw comparisons between the struggles of his characters and their own, or those of people they know. Hardy's tragedies are not dramatic. They are the simple tragedies that, unnoticed, take place around us every day.

Hardy was twice married, in 1874 to Emma Gifford, and in 1914 to Florence Dugdale. He died at Max Gate, a house which he had designed for himself in 1884 on the outskirts of Dorchester. His ashes were buried in the Poets' Corner of Westminster Abbey, but his heart, according to his own wishes, was buried in his parish churchyard.

Although "The Three Strangers" has a happy ending, it is otherwise typical of Hardy's best work. The story makes superb use of local color, and the characters are substantially developed. The rustic humor of the story is set against a somber background that never lets the reader forget that life is hard. First published in 1883, "The Three Strangers" was five years later included in *Wessex Tales*.

THOMAS HARDY 1840-1928



The Three Strangers



AMONG the few features of agricultural England which retain an appearance but little modified by the lapse of centuries, may be reckoned the high, grassy, and furzy downs, coombs,¹ or ewe-leases, as they are indifferently called, that fill a large area of certain counties in the south and southwest. If any mark of human occupation is met with hereon it usually takes the form of the solitary cottage of some shepherd.

Fifty years ago² such a lonely cottage stood on such a down, and may possibly be standing there now. In spite of its loneliness, however, the spot, by actual measurement, was not more than five miles from a county town. Yet that affected it little. Five miles of irregular upland, during the long, inimical seasons, with their slets, snows, rains,

and mists, afford with drawing space enough to isolate a Timon or a Nebuchadnezzar;³ much less, in fair weather, to please that less repellent tribe, the poets, philosophers, artists, and others who "conceive and meditate of pleasant things."

Some old earthen camp or barrow,⁴ some clump of trees, at least some starved fragment of ancient hedge, is usually taken advantage of in the erection of these forlorn

¹coombs. Small valleys or hollows.

²Fifty years ago. The story was first published in 1883.

³Timon or a Nebuchadnezzar. Timon was an Athenian of the fifth century B.C. who distrusted and avoided his fellow men. Nebuchadnezzar was the Assyrian king who, according to the Bible, spent four years alone in the wilderness living on grass.

⁴barrow. In this part of England there are many mounds of earth covering graves of early inhabitants.

dwellings. But, in the present case, such a kind of shelter had been disregarded. Higher Crowstairs, as the house was called, stood quite detached and undefended. The only reason for its precise situation seemed to be the crossing of two footpaths at right angles hard by, which may have crossed there and thus for a good five hundred years. Hence the house was exposed to the elements on all sides. But, though the wind up here blew unmistakably when it did blow, and the rain hit hard whenever it fell, the various weathers of the winter season were not quite so formidable on the coomb as they were imagined to be by dwellers on low ground. The raw rimes were not so pernicious as in the hollows, and the frosts were scarcely so severe. When the shepherd and his family who tenanted the house were pitied for their sufferings from the exposure, they said that upon the whole they were less inconvenienced by "wuzzes and flames"⁵ than when they had lived by the stream of a snug, neighboring valley.

The night of March 28, 182-, was precisely one of the nights that were wont to call forth these expressions of commiseration. The level rain-storm smote walls, slopes, and hedges

like the clothyard shafts of Senlac and Crécy.⁶ Such sheep and outdoor animals as had no shelter stood with their buttocks to the winds; while the tails of little birds trying to roost on some scraggy thorn were blown inside-out like umbrellas. The gable end of the cottage was stained with wet, and the eavesdroppings flapped against the wall. Yet never was commiseration for the shepherd more misplaced. For that cheerful rustic was entertaining a large party in glorification of the christening of his second girl.

The guests had arrived before the rain began to fall, and they were all now assembled in the chief or living room of the dwelling. A glance into the apartment at eight o'clock on this eventful evening would have resulted in the opinion that it was as cozy and comfortable a nook as could be wished for in boisterous weather. The calling of its inhabitant was proclaimed by a number of highly polished sheepcrooks without stems that were hung ornamentally over the fireplace, the curl of each shining crook varying from the antiquated type engraved in the patriarchal pictures of old family Bibles to the most approved fashion of the last local sheep-fair. The room was lighted by half a dozen candles, having wicks only a trifle smaller than the grease which enveloped them, in candlesticks that were never used but at high-days, holy-days, and family feasts. The lights were scattered about the room, two of them standing

⁵"wuzzes and flames." Hoarseness and sore throat.

⁶*the clothyard shafts of Senlac and Crécy.* Archers played an important part in the battles of Hastings (fought on Senlac hill) and Crécy. The "clothyard shafts" were arrows a yard long.



on the chimney piece. This position of candles was in itself significant. Candles on the chimney piece always meant a party.

On the hearth, in front of a backbrand to give substance, blazed a fire of thorns, that crackled "like the laughter of the fool."⁷

Nineteen persons were gathered here. Of these, five women, wearing gowns of various bright hues, sat in chairs along the wall; girls shy and not shy filled the window-bench; four men, including Charley Jake, the hedge carpenter, Elijah New, the parish clerk, and John Pitcher, a neighbouring dairyman, the shepherd's father-in-law, lolled in the settle; a young man and maid, who were blushing over tentative *pourparlers*⁸ on a life-companionship, sat

beneath the corner-cupboard; and an elderly engaged man of fifty or upward moved restlessly about from spots where his betrothed was not to the spot where she was. Enjoyment was pretty general, and so much the more prevailed in being unhampered by conventional restrictions. Absolute confidence in each other's good opinion begat perfect ease, while the finishing stroke of manner, amounting to a truly princely serenity, was lent to the majority by the absence of any expression or trait denoting that they wished to get on in the world, enlarge their minds, or do any eclipsing

⁷"like the laughter of the fool." The quotation is from Ecclesiastes 7:6.

⁸*pourparlers*. A French word meaning "negotiations."



thing whatever—which nowadays so generally nips the bloom and *bonhomie*⁹ of all except the two extremes of the social scale.

Shepherd Fennel had married well, his wife being a dairyman's daughter from a vale at a distance, who brought fifty guineas in her pocket—and kept them there, till they should be required for ministering to the needs of a coming family. This frugal woman had been somewhat exercised as to the character that should be given to the gathering. A sit-still party had its advantages; but an undisturbed position of ease in chairs and settles was apt

⁹*bonhomie*. French for "good nature."

¹⁰*serpent*. A deep-toned wind instrument about eight feet long, made of wood covered with leather, with three U-shaped turns.

to lead on the men to such an unconscionable deal of toping that they would sometimes fairly drink the house dry. A dancing-party was the alternative; but this, while avoiding the foregoing objection on the score of good drink, had a counter-balancing disadvantage in the matter of good victuals, the ravenous appetites engendered by the exercise causing immense havoc in the buttery. Shepherdess Fennel fell back upon the intermediate plan of mingling short dances with short periods of talk and singing, so as to hinder any ungovernable rage in either. But this scheme was entirely confined to her own gentle mind: the shepherd himself was in the mood to exhibit the most reckless phases of hospitality.

The fiddler was a boy of those parts, about twelve years of age, who had a wonderful dexterity in jigs and reels, though his fingers were so small and short as to necessitate a constant shifting for the high notes, from which he scrambled back to the first position with sounds not of unmixed purity of tone. At seven the shrill tweedle-dee of this youngster had begun, accompanied by a booming ground-bass from Elijah New, the parish-clerk, who had thoughtfully brought with him his favorite musical instrument, the serpent.¹⁰ Dancing was instantaneous, Mrs. Fennel privately enjoining the players on no account to let the dance exceed the length of a quarter of an hour.

But Elijah and the boy, in the excitement of their position, quite forgot the injunction. Moreover, Oliver Giles, a man of seventeen, one of the dancers, who was enamored of his partner, a fair girl of thirty-three rolling years, had recklessly handed a new crownpiece to the musicians, as a bribe to keep going as long as they had muscle and wind. Mrs. Fennel, seeing the steam begin to generate on the countenances of her guests, crossed over and touched the fiddler's elbow and put her hand on the serpent's mouth. But they took no notice, and fearing she might lose her character of genial hostess if she were to interfere too markedly, she retired and sat down helpless. And so the dance whizzed on with cumulative fury, the performers moving in their planet-like courses, direct and retrograde, from apogee to perigee,¹¹ till the hand of the well-kicked clock at the bottom of the room had traveled over the circumference of an hour.

While these cheerful events were in course of enactment within Fennel's pastoral dwelling, an incident having considerable bearing on the party had occurred in the gloomy night without. Mrs. Fennel's concern about the growing fierceness of the dance corresponded in point of time with the ascent of a human figure to the solitary hill of Higher Crowstairs from the direction of the distant town. This personage strode on through the rain without a pause, following the little-worn path which,

further on in its course, skirted the shepherd's cottage.

It was nearly the time of the full moon, and on this account, though the sky was lined with a uniform sheet of dripping cloud, ordinary objects out of doors were readily visible. The sad wan light revealed the lonely pedestrian to be a man of supple frame; his gait suggested that he had somewhat passed the period of perfect and instinctive agility, though not so far as to be otherwise than rapid of motion when occasion required. In point of fact, he might have been about forty years of age. He appeared tall, but a recruiting sergeant, or other person accustomed to the judging of men's heights by the eye, would have discerned that this was chiefly owing to his gauntness, and that he was not more than five-feet-eight or nine.

Notwithstanding the regularity of his tread, there was caution in it, as in that of one who mentally feels his way; and despite the fact that it was not a black coat nor a dark garment of any sort that he wore, there was something about him which suggested that he naturally belonged to the black-coated tribes of men. His clothes were of fustian, and his boots hob-nailed, yet in his progress he showed not the mud-accustomed bearing of hobnailed and fustianed peasantry.

By the time that he had arrived

¹¹*from apogee to perigee.* From farthest to nearest; the terms are usually applied to the orbit of a planet.



abreast of the shepherd's premises the rain came down, or rather came along, with yet more determined violence. The outskirts of the little settlement partially broke the force of wind and rain, and this induced him to stand still. The most salient of the shepherd's domestic erections was an empty sty at the forward corner of his hedgeless garden, for in these latitudes the principle of masking the homelier features of your establishment by a conventional frontage was unknown. The traveler's eye was attracted to this small build-

ing by the pallid shine of the wet slates that covered it. He turned aside, and, finding it empty, stood under the pent-roof for shelter.

While he stood, the boom of the serpent within the adjacent house, and the lesser strains of the fiddler, reached the spot as an accompaniment to the surging hiss of the flying rain on the sod, its louder beating on the cabbage-leaves of the garden, on the eight or ten bee-hives just discernible by the path, and its dripping from the eaves into a row of buckets and pans that had been placed under the walls of the cottage. For at Higher Crowstairs, as at all such elevated domiciles, the grand difficulty of housekeeping was an insufficiency of water; and a casual rainfall was utilized by turning out, as catchers, every utensil that the house contained. Some queer stories might be told of the contrivances for economy in suds and dish-waters that are absolutely necessitated in upland habitations during the droughts of summer. But at this season there were no such exigencies; a mere acceptance of what the skies bestowed was sufficient for an abundant store.

At last the notes of the serpent ceased and the house was silent. This cessation of activity aroused the solitary pedestrian from the reverie into which he had lapsed, and, emerging from the shed, with an apparently new intention, he walked up the path to the house-door. Arrived here, his first act was to kneel

down on a large stone beside the row of vessels, and to drink a copious draught from one of them. Having quenched his thirst he rose and lifted his hand to knock, but paused with his eye upon the panel. Since the dark surface of the wood revealed absolutely nothing, it was evident that he must be mentally looking through the door, as if he wished to measure thereby all the possibilities that a house of this sort might include, and how they might bear upon the question of his entry.

In his indecision he turned and surveyed the scene around. Not a soul was anywhere visible. The garden path stretched downward from his feet, gleaming like the track of a snail; the roof of the little well (mostly dry), the well-cover, the top rail of the garden-gate, were varnished with the same dull liquid glaze; while, far away in the vale, a faint whiteness of more than usual extent showed that the rivers were high in the meads. Beyond all this winked a few bleared lamplights through the beating drops—lights that denoted the situation of the county-town from which he had appeared to come. The absence of all notes of life in that direction seemed to clinch his intentions, and he knocked at the door.

Within a desultory chat had taken the place of movement and musical sound. The hedge-carpenter was suggesting a song to the company, which nobody just then was inclined to undertake, so that the knock af-

forded a not unwelcome diversion.

"Walk in!" said the shepherd promptly.

The latch clicked upward, and out of the night our pedestrian appeared upon the doormat. The shepherd arose, snuffed two of the nearest candles, and turned to look at him.

Their light disclosed that the stranger was dark in complexion and not unprepossessing as to feature. His hat, which for a moment he did not remove, hung low over his eyes, without concealing that they were



large, open, and determined, moving with a flash rather than a glance round the room. He seemed pleased with the survey, and, baring his shaggy head, said, in a rich deep voice, "The rain is so heavy, friends, that I ask leave to come in and rest a while."

"To be sure, stranger," said the shepherd. "And faith, you've been lucky in choosing your time, for we are having a bit of a fling for a glad cause—though, to be sure, a man could hardly wish that glad cause to happen more than once a year."

"Nor less," spoke up a woman. "For 'tis best to get your family over and done with, as soon as you can, so as to be all the earlier out of the fag o't."

"And what may be this glad cause?" asked the stranger.

"A birth and christening," said the shepherd.

The stranger hoped his host might not be made unhappy either by too many or too few of such episodes, and being invited by a gesture to a pull at the mug, he readily acqui-



esced. His manner, which, before entering, had been so dubious, was now altogether that of a careless and candid man.

"Late to be traipsing athwart this coomb—hey?" said the engaged man of fifty.

"Late it is, master, as you say. I'll take a seat in the chimney corner, if you have nothing to urge against it, ma'am; for I am a little moist on the side that was next the rain."

Mrs. Shepherd Fennel assented, and made room for the self-invited comer, who, having got completely

inside the chimney corner, stretched out his legs and his arms with the expansiveness of a person quite at home.

"Yes, I am rather cracked in the vamp," he said freely, seeing that the eyes of the shepherd's wife fell upon his boots, "and I am not well fitted either. I have had some rough times lately, and have been forced to pick up what I can get in the way of wearing, but I must find a suit better fit for working-days when I reach home."

"One of hereabouts?" she inquired.

"Not quite that—farther up the country."

"I thought so. And so am I; and by your tongue you come from my neighbourhood."

"But you would hardly have heard of me," he said, quickly. "My time would be long before yours, ma'am, you see."

This testimony to the youthfulness of his hostess had the effect of stopping her cross-examination.

"There is only one thing more wanted to make me happy," continued the new-comer, "and that is a little baccy, which I am sorry to say I am out of."

"I'll fill your pipe," said the shepherd.

"I must ask you to lend me a pipe likewise."

"A smoker, and no pipe about 'ee?"

"I have dropped it somewhere on the road."

The shepherd filled and handed him a new clay pipe, saying, as he

did so, "Hand me your baccy-box—I'll fill that, too, now I am about it."

The man went through the movement of searching his pockets.

"Lost that, too?" said his entertainer, with some surprise.

"I'm afraid so," said the man with some confusion. "Give it to me in a screw of paper." Lighting his pipe at the candle with a suction that drew the whole flame into the bowl, he resettled himself in the corner and bent his looks upon the faint steam from his damp legs, as if he wished to say no more.

Meanwhile the general body of guests had been taking little notice of this visitor by reason of an absorbing discussion in which they were engaged with the band about a tune for the next dance. The matter being settled, they were about to stand up when an interruption came in the shape of another knock at the door.

At the sound of the same the man in the chimney-corner took up the poker and began stirring the brands as if doing it thoroughly were the one aim of his existence; and a second time the shepherd said, "Walk in!" In a moment another man stood upon the straw-woven door-mat. He, too, was a stranger.

This individual was one of a type radically different from the first. There was more of the commonplace in his manner, and a certain jovial cosmopolitanism sat upon his features. He was several years older than the first arrival, his hair being



slightly frosted, his eyebrows bristly, and his whiskers cut back from his cheeks. His face was rather full and flabby, and yet it was not altogether a face without power. A few grog-blossoms marked the neighbourhood of his nose. He flung back his long drab great-coat, revealing that beneath it he wore a suit of cinder-gray shade throughout, large heavy seals, of some metal or other that would take a polish, dangling from his fob as his only personal ornament. Shaking the water-drops from his low-crowned glazed hat, he said, "I must ask for

a few minutes' shelter, comrades, or I shall be wetted to my skin before I get to Casterbridge."

"Make yourself at home, master," said the shepherd, perhaps a trifle less heartily than on the first occasion. Not that Fennel had the least tinge of niggardliness in his composition; but the room was far from large, spare chairs were not numerous, and damp companions were not altogether desirable at close quarters for the women and girls in their bright-coloured gowns.

However, the second comer, after taking off his great-coat, and hanging his hat on a nail in one of the ceiling-beams as if he had been specially invited to put it there, advanced and sat down at the table. This had been pushed so closely into the chimney-corner, to give all available room to the dancers, that its inner edge grazed the elbow of the man who had ensconced himself by the fire; and thus the two strangers were brought into close companionship. They nodded to each other by way of breaking the ice of unacquaintance, and the first stranger handed his neighbour the family mug—a huge vessel of brown ware, having its upper edge worn away like a threshold by the rub of whole generations of thirsty lips that had gone

the way of all flesh, and bearing the following inscription burned upon its rotund side in yellow letters:

There IS nO fuN
Untill I cUM

The other man, nothing loth, raised the mug to his lips, and drank on, and on, and on, till a curious blueness overspread the countenance of the shepherd's wife, who had regarded with no little surprise the first stranger's free offer to the second of what did not belong to him to dispense.

"I knew it!" said the toper to the shepherd with much satisfaction. "When I walked up your garden before coming in, and saw the hives all of a row, I said to myself, 'Where there's bees there's honey, and where there's honey there's mead.'¹² But mead of such a truly comfortable sort as this I really didn't expect to meet in my older days." He took yet another pull at the mug, till it assumed an ominous elevation.

"Glad you enjoy it!" said the shepherd warmly.

"It is goodish mead," assented Mrs. Fennel, with an absence of enthusiasm which seemed to say that it was possible to buy praise for one's cellar at too heavy a price. "It is trouble enough to make—and really I hardly think we shall make any more. For honey sells well, and we ourselves can make shift with a drop o' small mead and metheglin for common use from the comb-washings."

¹²*mead.* An alcoholic beverage made by fermenting a mixture of honey and water. A recipe is given a little farther on in the story. Metheglin is a less potent drink made by pouring water over the honeycomb after the saleable honey has been removed.

"Oh, but you'll never have the heart!" reproachfully cried the stranger in cinder-gray, after taking up the mug a third time and setting it down empty. "I love mead when 'tis old like this, as I love to go to church o' Sundays, or to relieve the needy any day of the week."

"Ha, ha, ha!" said the man in the chimney corner, who, in spite of the taciturnity induced by the pipe of tobacco, could not or would not refrain from this slight testimony to his comrade's humor.

Now, the old mead of those days, brewed of the purest first-year or maiden honey, four pounds to the gallon—with its due complement of white of eggs, cinnamon, ginger, cloves, mace, rosemary, yeast, and processes of working, bottling, and cellaring—tasted remarkably strong; but it did not taste so strong as it actually was. Hence, presently the stranger in cinder-gray at the table, moved by its creeping influence, unbuttoned his waistcoat, threw him-

self back in his chair, spread his legs, and made his presence felt in various ways.

"Well, well, as I say," he resumed, "I am going to Casterbridge, and to Casterbridge I must go. I should have been almost there by this time; but the rain drove me into your dwelling, and I'm not sorry for it."

"You don't live in Casterbridge?" said the shepherd.

"Not as yet; though I shortly mean to move there."

"Going to set up in trade, perhaps?"

"No, no," said the shepherd's wife. "It is easy to see that the gentleman is rich, and don't want to work at anything."

The cinder-gray stranger paused, as if to consider whether he would accept that definition of himself. He presently rejected it by answering, "Rich is not quite the word for me, dame. I do work, and I must work. And even if I only get to Casterbridge by midnight I must begin work there at eight to-morrow morning. Yes, het or wet, blow or snow, famine or sword, my day's work to-morrow must be done."

"Poor man! Then, in spite o' seeming, you be worse off than we," replied the shepherd's wife.

"'Tis the nature of my trade, men and maidens. 'Tis the nature of my trade more than my poverty. . . . But really and truly I must up and off, or I shan't get a lodging in the town." However, the speaker did not move, and directly added,



"There's time for one more draught of friendship before I go; and I'd perform it at once if the mug were not dry."

"Here's a mug o' small," said Mrs. Fennel. "Small, we call it, though to be sure 'tis only the first wash o' the combs."

"No," said the stranger disdainfully. "I won't spoil your first kindness by partaking o' your second."

"Certainly not," broke in Fennel. "We don't increase and multiply every day, and I'll fill the mug again." He went away to the dark place under the stairs where the barrel stood. The shepherdess followed him.

"Why should you do this?" she said reproachfully, as soon as they were alone. "He's emptied it once, though it held enough for ten people; and now he's not contented w' the small, but must needs call for more o' the strong! And a stranger unbeknown to any of us. For my part, I don't like the look o' the man at all."

"But he's in the house, my honey; and 'tis a wet night, and a christening. Daze it, what's a cup of mead more or less? There'll be plenty more next bee-burning."

"Very well—this time, then," she answered, looking wistfully at the barrel. "But what is the man's calling, and where is he one of, that he should come in and join us like this?"

"I don't know. I'll ask him again."

The catastrophe of having the mug drained dry at one pull by the

stranger in cinder-gray was effectually guarded against this time by Mrs. Fennel. She poured out his allowance in a small cup, keeping the large one at a discreet distance from him. When he had tossed off his portion the shepherd renewed his inquiry about the stranger's occupation.

The latter did not immediately reply, and the man in the chimney-corner, with sudden demonstrativeness, said, "Anybody may know my trade—I'm a wheelwright."

"A very good trade for these parts," said the shepherd.

"And anybody may know mine—if they've the sense to find it out," said the stranger in cinder-gray.

"You may generally tell what a man is by his claws," observed the hedge carpenter, looking at his own hands. "My fingers be as full of thorns as an old pincushion is of pins."

The hands of the man in the chimney corner instinctively sought the shade, and he gazed into the fire as



he resumed his pipe. The man at the table took up the hedge carpenter's remark, and added smartly, "True; but the oddity of my trade is that, instead of setting a mark upon me, it sets a mark upon my customers."

No observation being offered by anybody in elucidation of this enigma, the shepherd's wife once more called for a song. The same obstacles presented themselves as at the former time—one had not voice, another had forgotten the first verse. The stranger at the table, whose soul had now risen to a good working temperature, relieved the difficulty by exclaiming that, to start the company, he would sing himself. Thrusting one thumb into the armhole of his waistcoat, he waved the other hand in the air, and, with an extemporizing gaze at the shining sheepcrooks above the mantel piece began:

*O, my trade it is the rarest one,
Simple shepherds all—
My trade is a sight to see;
For my customers I tie, and take
them up on high,
And waft 'em to a far countree!*

The room was silent when he had



finished the verse—with one exception, that of the man in the chimney corner, who, at the singer's word, "Chorus!" joined him in a deep bass voice of musical relish—

And waft 'em to a far countree!

Oliver Giles, John Pitcher the dairyman, the parish clerk, the engaged man of fifty, the row of young women against the wall, seemed lost in thought not of the gayest kind. The shepherd looked meditatively on the ground, the shepherdess gazed keenly at the singer, and with some suspicion; she was doubting whether this stranger were merely singing an old song from recollection, or was composing one there and then for the occasion. All were as perplexed at the obscure revelation as the guests at Belshazzar's Feast,¹³ except the man in the chimney corner, who quietly said, "Second verse, stranger," and smoked on.

The singer thoroughly moistened himself from his lips inward, and



¹³at Belshazzar's Feast. A mysterious hand wrote upon the wall a message which none could read. Daniel v.



went on with the next stanza as requested:

*My tools are but common ones,
Simple shepherds all—
My tools are no sight to see;
A little hempen string, and a post
whereon to swing,
Are implements enough for me!*

Shepherd Fennel glanced round. There was no longer any doubt that the stranger was answering his question rhythmically. The guests one and all started back with suppressed exclamations. The young woman engaged to the man of fifty fainted halfway, and would have proceeded, but finding him wanting in alacrity for catching her she sat down trembling.

"Oh, he's the —!" whispered the people in the background, mentioning the name of an ominous public officer. "He's come to do it! 'Tis to be at Casterbridge jail to-morrow—the man for sheep-stealing—the poor clock-maker we heard of, who used to live away at Shottsford and had no work to do—Timothy Summers, whose family were a-starving,

and so he went out of Shottsford by the highroad, and took a sheep in open daylight defying the farmer and the farmer's wife and the farmer's lad, and every man jack among 'em. He" (and they nodded toward the stranger of the deadly trade) "is come from up the country to do it because there's not enough to do in his own county-town, and he's got the place here now our own county man's dead; he's going to live in the same cottage under the prison wall."

The stranger in cinder-gray took no notice of this whispered string of observations, but again wetted his lips. Seeing that his friend in the chimney-corner was the only one who reciprocated his joviality in any way, he held out his cup toward that appreciative comrade, who also held out his own. They clinked together, the eyes of the rest of the room hanging upon the singer's actions. He parted his lips for the third verse;



but at that moment another knock was audible upon the door. This time the knock was faint and hesitating.

The company seemed scared; the shepherd looked with consternation toward the entrance, and it was with some effort that he resisted his alarmed wife's deprecatory glance, and uttered for the third time the welcoming words "Walk in!"

The door was gently opened, and another man stood upon the mat. He, like those who had preceded him, was a stranger. This time it was a short, small personage, of fair complexion, and dressed in a decent suit of dark clothes.

"Can you tell me the way to —?" he began: when, gazing round the room to observe the nature of the company amongst whom he had fallen, his eyes lighted on the stranger in cinder-gray. It was just at the instant when the latter, who had thrown his mind into his song with such a will that he scarcely heeded the interruption, silenced all whispers and inquiries by bursting into his third verse—

*To-morrow is my working day,
Simple shepherds all—
To-morrow is a working day for
me:
For the farmer's sheep is slain, and
the lad who did it ta'en,
And on his soul may God ha'
merc-y!*

The stranger in the chimney-corner, waving cups with the singer so



heartily that his mead splashed over on the hearth, repeated in his bass voice as before:

*And on his soul may God ha'
merc-y!*

All this time the third stranger had been standing in the doorway. Finding now that he did not come forward or go on speaking, the guests particularly regarded him. They noticed to their surprise that he stood before them the picture of abject terror—his knees trembling, his hand shaking so violently that the door latch by which he supported

himself rattled audibly; his white lips were parted, and his eyes fixed on the merry officer of justice in the middle of the room. A moment more and he had turned, closed the door, and fled.

"What a man can it be?" said the shepherd.

The rest, between the awfulness of their late discovery and the odd conduct of this third visitor, looked as if they knew not what to think, and said nothing. Instinctively they withdrew further and further from the grim gentleman in their midst, whom some of them seemed to take for the Prince of Darkness himself, till they formed a remote circle, an empty space of floor being left between them and him—

. . . *circulus, cujus centrum diabolus*.¹⁴

The room was so silent—though there were more than twenty people in it—that nothing could be heard but the patter of the rain against the window shutters, accompanied by the occasional hiss of a stray drop that fell down the chimney into the fire, and the steady puffing of the man in the corner, who had now resumed his pipe of long clay.

The stillness was unexpectedly broken. The distant sound of a gun reverberated through the air—apparently from the direction of the county town.

"Be jiggered!" cried the stranger who had sung the song, jumping up.

"What does that mean?" asked several.

"A prisoner escaped from the jail—that's what it means."

All listened. The sound was repeated, and none of them spoke but the man in the chimney corner, who said quietly, "I've often been told that in this county they fire a gun at such times; but I never heard it till now."

"I wonder if it is *my* man?" murmured the personage in cinder-gray.

"Surely it is!" said the shepherd involuntarily. "And surely we've zeed him! That little man who looked in at the door by now, and quivered like a leaf when he zeed ye and heard your song!"

"His teeth chattered, and the breath went out of his body," said the dairyman.

"And his heart seemed to sink within him like a stone," said Oliver Giles.

"And he bolted as if he'd been shot at," said the hedge carpenter.

"True—his teeth chattered, and his heart seemed to sink; and he bolted as if he'd been shot at," slowly summed up the man in the chimney corner.

"I didn't notice it," remarked the hangman.

"We were all a-wondering what made him run off in such a fright," faltered one of the women against the wall, "and now 'tis explained!"

The firing of the alarm-gun went

¹⁴*circulus . . . diabolus*. A circle in the center of which was the devil.

on at intervals, low and sullenly, and their suspicions became a certainty. The sinister gentleman in cinder-gray roused himself.

"Is there a constable here?" he asked, in thick tones. "If so, let him step forward."

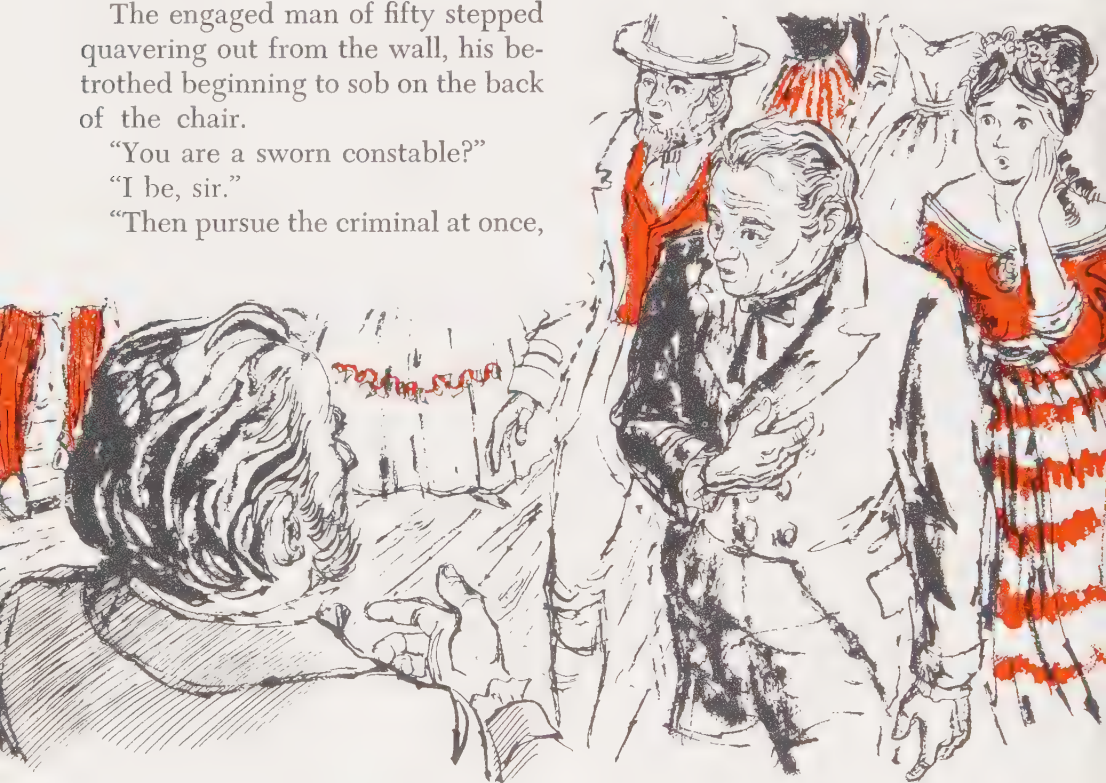
The engaged man of fifty stepped quavering out from the wall, his betrothed beginning to sob on the back of the chair.

"You are a sworn constable?"

"I be, sir."

"Then pursue the criminal at once,

and Charles Jake? No; for there's the king's royal crown painted on en in yaller and gold, and the lion and the unicorn, so as when I raise en up and hit my prisoner, 'tis made a lawful blow thereby. I wouldn't



with assistance, and bring him back here. He can't have gone far."

"I will, sir, I will—when I've got my staff. I'll go home and get it, and come sharp here, and start in a body."

"Staff!—never mind your staff; the man'll be gone!"

"But I can't do nothing without my staff—can I, William, and John,

'tempt to take up a man without my staff—no, not I. If I hadn't the law to gie me courage, why, instead o' my taking up him he might take up me!"

"Now, I'm a king's man myself, and can give you authority enough for this," said the formidable officer in gray. "Now then, all of ye, be ready. Have ye any lanterns?"

"Yes—have ye any lanterns?—I demand it!" said the constable.

"And the rest of you able-bodied —"

"Able-bodied men—yes—the rest of ye!" said the constable.

"Have you some good stout staves and pitchforks —"

"Staves and pitchforks—in the name o' the law! And take 'em in yer hands and go in quest, and do as we in authority tell ye!"

Thus aroused, the men prepared to give chase. The evidence was, indeed, though circumstantial, so convincing, that but little argument was needed to show the shepherd's guests that after what they had seen it would look very much like connivance if they did not instantly pursue the unhappy third stranger, who could not as yet have gone more than a few hundred yards over such uneven country.

A shepherd is always well provided with lanterns; and, lighting these hastily, and with hurdle-staves in their hands, they poured out of the door, taking a direction along the crest of the hill, away from the town, the rain having fortunately a little abated.

Disturbed by the noise, or possibly by unpleasant dreams of her baptism, the child who had been christened began to cry heart-brokenly in the room overhead. These notes of grief came down through the chinks of the floor to the ears of the women below, who jumped up one by one, and seemed glad of the excuse to

ascend and comfort the baby, for the incidents of the last half-hour greatly oppressed them. Thus in the space of two or three minutes the room on the ground floor was deserted quite.

But it was not for long. Hardly had the sound of footsteps died away when a man returned round the corner of the house from the direction the pursuers had taken. Peeping in at the door, and seeing nobody there, he entered leisurely. It was the stranger of the chimney corner, who had gone out with the rest. The motive of his return was shown by his helping himself to a cut piece of skimmer-cake that lay on a ledge beside where he had sat, and which he had apparently forgotten to take with him. He also poured out half a cup more mead from the quantity that remained, ravenously eating and drinking these as he stood. He had not finished when another figure came in just as quietly—his friend in cinder-gray.

"O—you here?" said the latter, smiling. "I thought you had gone to help in the capture." And this speaker also revealed the object of his return by looking solicitously round for the fascinating mug of old mead.

"And I thought you had gone," said the other, continuing his skimmer-cake with some effort.

"Well, on second thoughts, I felt there were enough without me," said the first, confidentially, "and such a night as it is, too. Besides, 'tis the

business o' the government to take care of its criminals—not mine.”

“True; so it is. And I felt as you did, that there were enough without me.”

“I don't want to break my limbs running over the humps and hollows of this wild country.”

“Nor I neither, between you and me.”

“These shepherd-people are used to it—simple-minded souls, you know, stirred up to anything in a moment. They'll have him ready for me before the morning, and no trouble to me at all.”

“They'll have him, and we shall have saved ourselves all labor in the matter.”

“True, true. Well, my way is to Casterbridge; and 'tis as much as my legs will do to take me that far. Going the same way?”

“No, I am sorry to say! I have to get home over there” (he nodded indefinitely to the right), “and I feel as you do, that it is quite enough for my legs to do before bedtime.”

The other had by this time finished the mead in the mug, after which, shaking hands heartily at the door, and wishing each other well, they went their several ways.

In the meantime the company of pursuers had reached the end of the hog's-back elevation which dominated this part of the coomb. They had decided on no particular plan of action; and, finding that the man of the baleful trade was no longer in their company, they seemed quite

unable to form any such plan now. They descended in all directions down the hill, and straightway several of the party fell into the snare set by Nature for all misguided mid-night ramblers over this part of the cretaceous formation. The “lynchets,” or flint slopes, which belted the escarpments at intervals of a dozen yards, took the less cautious ones unawares, and losing their footing on the rubbly steep they slid sharply downwards, the lanterns rolling from their hands to the bottom, and there lying on their sides until the horn was scorched through.

When they had again gathered themselves together, the shepherd, as the man who knew the country best, took the lead, and guided them round these treacherous inclines. The lanterns, which seemed rather to dazzle their eyes and warn the fugitive than to assist them in the exploration, were extinguished, due silence was observed; and in this more rational order they plunged into the vale. It was a grassy, briery, moist defile, affording some shelter to any person who had sought it; but the party perambulated it in vain, and ascended on the other side. Here they wandered apart, and after an interval closed together again to report progress. At the second time of closing in they found themselves near a lonely ash, the single tree on this part of the coomb, probably sown there by a passing bird some fifty years before. And here, standing a little to one side of



the trunk, as motionless as the trunk itself, appeared the man they were in quest of, his outline being well defined against the sky beyond. The band noiselessly drew up and faced him.

"Your money or your life!" said the constable sternly to the still figure.

"No, no," whispered John Pitcher. "'Tisn't our side ought to say that. That's the doctrine of vagabonds like him, and we be on the side of the law."

"Well, well," replied the constable impatiently; "I must say something, mustn't I? and if you had all the weight o' this undertaking upon your mind, perhaps you'd say the wrong thing too!—Prisoner at the bar, sur-

render, in the name of the Father—the Crown, I mane!"

The man under the tree seemed now to notice them for the first time, and, giving them no opportunity whatever for exhibiting their courage, he strolled slowly toward them. He was, indeed, the little man, the third stranger; but his trepidation had in a great measure gone.

"Well, travelers," he said, "did I hear ye speak to me?"

"You did: you've got to come and be our prisoner at once!" said the constable. "We arrest 'ee on the charge of not biding in Casterbridge jail in a decent proper manner to be hung to-morrow morning. Neighbours, do your duty, and seize the culprit!"

On hearing the charge, the man seemed enlightened, and, saying not another word, resigned himself with preternatural civility to the search-party, who, with their staves in their hands, surrounded him on all sides, and marched him back toward the shepherd's cottage.

It was eleven o'clock by the time they arrived. The light shining from the open door, a sound of men's voices within, proclaimed to them as they approached the house that some new events had arisen in their absence. On entering they discovered the shepherd's living room to be invaded by two officers from Casterbridge jail, and a well-known magistrate who lived at the nearest country seat, intelligence of the escape having become generally circulated.

"Gentlemen," said the constable, "I have brought back your man—not without risk and danger; but every one must do his duty! He is inside this circle of able-bodied persons, who have lent me useful aid, considering their ignorance of Crown work. Men, bring forward your prisoner!" And the third stranger was led to the light.

"Who is this?" said one of the officials.

"The man," said the constable.

"Certainly not," said the turnkey; and the first corroborated his statement.

"But how can it be otherwise?" asked the constable. "Or why was he so terrified at sight o' the singing instrument of the law who sat



there?" Here he related the strange behavior of the third stranger on entering the house during the hangman's song.

"Can't understand it," said the officer coolly. "All I know is that it is not the condemned man. He's quite a different character from this one; a gauntish fellow, with dark hair and eyes, rather good-looking, and with a musical bass voice that if you heard it once you'd never mistake as long as you lived."

"Why, souls—'twas the man in the chimney corner!"

"Hey—what?" said the magistrate, coming forward after inquiring particulars from the shepherd in the background. "Haven't you got the man after all?"



"Well, sir," said the constable, "he's the man we were in search of, that's true; and yet he's not the man we were in search of. For the man we were in search of was not the man we wanted, sir, if you understand my everyday way; for 'twas the man in the chimney corner!"

"A pretty kettle of fish altogether!" said the magistrate. "You had better start for the other man at once."

The prisoner now spoke for the first time. The mention of the man in the chimney corner seemed to

have moved him as nothing else could do. "Sir," he said, stepping forward to the magistrate, "take no more trouble about me. The time is come when I may as well speak. I have done nothing; my crime is that the condemned man is my brother. Early this afternoon I left home at Shottsford to tramp it all the way to Casterbridge jail to bid him farewell. I was benighted, and called here to rest and ask the way. When I opened the door I saw before me the very man, my brother, that I thought to see in the condemned cell at Casterbridge. He was in this chimney corner; and jammed close to him, so that he could not have got out if he had tried, was the executioner who'd come to take his life, singing a song about it, and not knowing that it was his victim who was close by, joining in to save appearances. My brother looked a glance of agony at me, and I knew he meant, 'Don't reveal what you see, my life depends on it.' I was so terror-struck that I could hardly stand, and, not knowing what I did, I turned and hurried away."

The narrator's manner and tone had the stamp of truth, and his story made a great impression on all around. "And do you know where your brother is at the present time?" asked the magistrate.

"I do not. I have never seen him since I closed this door."

"I can testify to that, for we've been between ye-ever since," said the constable.

"Where does he think to fly to?—what is his occupation?"

"He's a watch-and-clock-maker, sir."

"'A said 'a was a wheelwright—a wicked rogue," said the constable.

"The wheels of clocks and watches he meant, no doubt," said Shepherd Fennel. "I thought his hands were palish for 's trade."

"Well, it appears to me that nothing can be gained by retaining this poor man in custody," said the magistrate; "your business lies with the other, unquestionably."

And so the little man was released off-hand; but he looked nothing the less sad on that account, it being beyond the power of magistrate or constable to raze out the written troubles in his brain, for they concerned another whom he regarded with more solicitude than himself. When this was done, and the man had gone his way, the night was found to be so far advanced that it was deemed useless to renew the search before the next morning.

Next day, accordingly, the quest for the clever sheep-stealer became general and keen, to all appearance at least. But the intended punishment was cruelly disproportioned to the transgression, and the sympathy of a great many country-folk in that district was strongly on the side of the fugitive. Moreover, his marvellous coolness and daring in hob-and-nobbing with the hangman, under the unprecedented circumstances of the shepherd's party, won their ad-

miration. So that it may be questioned if all those who ostensibly made themselves so busy in exploring woods and fields and lanes were quite so thorough when it came to the private examination of their own lofts and outhouses. Stories were afloat of a mysterious figure being occasionally seen in some old overgrown trackway or other, remote from turnpike roads; but when a search was instituted in any of these suspected quarters nobody was found. Thus the days and weeks passed without tidings.

In brief, the bass-voiced man of the chimney-corner was never recaptured. Some said that he went across the sea, others that he did not, but buried himself in the depths of a populous city. At any rate, the gentleman in cinder-gray never did his morning's work at Casterbridge, nor met anywhere at all, for business purposes, the genial comrade with whom he had passed an hour of relaxation in the lonely house on the coomb.

The grass has long been green on the graves of Shepherd Fennel and his frugal wife; the guests who made up the christening party have mainly followed their entertainers to the tomb; the baby in whose honor they all had met is a matron in the sere and yellow leaf. But the arrival of the three strangers at the shepherd's that night, and the details connected therewith, is a story as well known as ever in the country about Higher Crowstairs.

Discussion

1. Why do you think Hardy devotes so much attention to the setting?
2. At what point in the story did you begin to suspect the identity of the first stranger? At what point did you become certain?
3. What was the crime for which the first stranger was wanted? Why do you think Hardy chose this particular crime?
4. Point out passages in which Hardy shows his sympathy for the sheep-stealer through (a) his own statements as story-teller, and (b) remarks or actions of various characters.
5. What is your opinion of the constable? What purpose does he serve in (a) advancing the plot, and (b) creating a mood?
6. In what respects is the story realistic? In what respects is it romantic?
7. Hardy had a deep understanding of human nature, and many passages in the story are worth considering in detail. Analyze thoroughly the meaning of the following: "Absolute confidence in each other's good opinion begat perfect ease, while the finishing stroke of manner, amounting to a truly princely serenity, was lent to the majority by the absence of any expression or trait denoting that they wished to get on in the world, enlarge their minds, or do any eclipsing thing whatever—which nowadays so generally nips the bloom and *bonhomie* of all except the two extremes of the social scale."

Research

1. Other short stories of Hardy's you might like to read include "Tony Kytes, the Arch-Deceiver," "The Withered Arm," "The Waiting Supper," and "A Changed Man."
2. A story that has a message for thoughtful young people in any period is Hardy's novel, *The Return of the Native*. Several students might read it and present a stimulating panel discussion on the meaning the story has for people today.
3. If you have any skill in drawing, you might try illustrating "The Three Strangers." Hardy's detailed descriptions are ample for the accurate picturing of characters or scenes.
4. A student with aspirations toward the law might find it interesting to report on crime and punishment in England in 1800-1850.



JOSEPH CONRAD

1857-1924

TEODOR JÓZEF KONRAD KORZENIOWSKI was born in the Ukraine, the son of an exiled Polish writer. The family later returned to Kracow, Poland, where Joseph attended school, learning French as well as Polish. Left an orphan at twelve, he spent the next five years under the guardianship of an uncle.

Conrad's first acquaintance with English literature came through Polish translations of Shakespeare and Dickens. He also read a translation of James Fenimore Cooper's novel, *The Pilot*, and it may have been this book which turned his thoughts to the sea. At any rate, at seventeen he shipped on a French merchant vessel as a common seaman. Three years later he sought employment on a British ship and began to learn English. In nine years he worked up to master mariner in the British merchant fleet.

After twenty years at sea Conrad retired in 1894 and settled near Canterbury, in Kent, to begin a new career as a novelist. As a result of considerable thought, he decided on English rather than French as the language in which he would write. Two years later Conrad married Jessie George. Two sons, Borys and John, were born in 1898 and 1906. On a visit to Poland in 1914 the Conrads were caught by the outbreak of World War I, but with the assistance of the United States ambassador in Vienna, they were able to get back to England. Conrad toured the United States in the spring of 1923, widely acclaimed as one of the greatest living writers. He died suddenly in 1924 and was buried at Canterbury.

Conrad had begun his first novel in 1889 during a long voyage. Completed in 1894, this became *Almayer's Folly*, published the following year. Best known among Conrad's other novels are *An Outcast of the Islands*, 1896; *The Nigger of the Narcissus*, his own favorite, 1897; *Lord Jim*, 1900; *Typhoon*, 1903; and *Victory*, 1915. Conrad published several volumes of short stories, among them, in 1899, *Tales of Unrest*, from which "The Lagoon" is taken.

Conrad's stories combine realism and romance. He is noted for his colorful descriptions and for his skill in creating atmosphere. It was character, however, that chiefly interested him. He had a theory that moral deterioration sets in when a man is prevented from developing his highest capabilities. The great test of character, he believed, is loyalty to the persons or principles that have been the best influence in a man's life. "The Lagoon" is one of many stories that illustrate this philosophy.

The Lagoon



THE white man, leaning with both arms over the roof of the little house in the stern of the boat, said to the steersman:

"We will pass the night in Arsat's clearing. It is late."

The Malay only grunted, and went on looking fixedly at the river. The white man rested his chin on his crossed arms and gazed at the wake of the boat. At the end of the straight avenue of forests cut by the intense glitter of the river, the sun appeared unclouded and dazzling, poised low over the water that shone smoothly like a band of metal. The forests, somber and dull, stood motionless and silent on each side of the broad stream. At the foot of

big, towering trees, trunkless nipa palms rose from the mud of the bank, in bunches of leaves enormous and heavy, that hung unstirring over the brown swirl of eddies. In the stillness of the air every tree, every leaf, every bough, every tendril of creeper and every petal of minute blossoms seemed to have been bewitched into an immobility perfect and final. Nothing moved on the river but the eight paddles that rose flashing regularly, dipped together with a single splash, while the steersman swept right and left with a periodic and sudden flourish of his blade describing a glinting semicircle above his head. The churned-up water frothed alongside

"The Lagoon," from *Tales of Unrest*, by Joseph Conrad, is reprinted by permission of J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd.

with a confused murmur. And the white man's canoe, advancing upstream in the short-lived disturbance of its own making, seemed to enter the portals of a land from which the very memory of motion had forever departed.

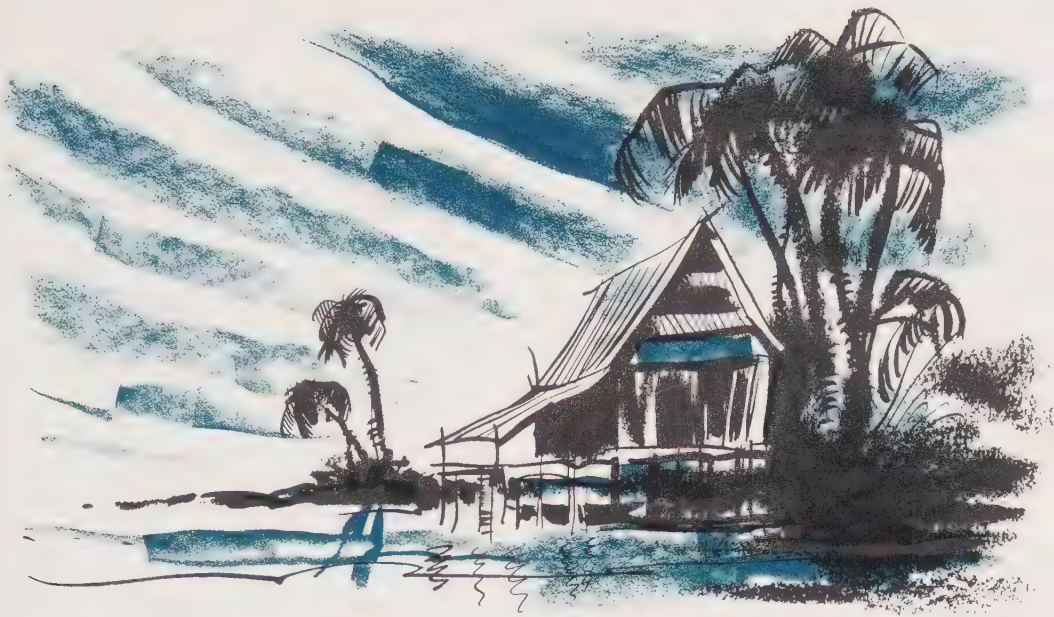
The white man, turning his back upon the setting sun, looked along the empty and broad expanse of the sea reach. For the last three miles of its course the wandering, hesitating river, as if enticed irresistibly by the freedom of an open horizon, flows straight into the sea, flows straight to the east—to the east that harbors both light and darkness. Astern of the boat the repeated call of some bird, a cry discordant and feeble, skipped along over the smooth water and lost itself, before it could reach the other shore, in the breathless silence of the world.

The steersman dug his paddle into the stream, and held hard with stiffened arms, his body thrown forward. The water gurgled aloud; and suddenly the long straight reach seemed to pivot on its center, the forests swung in a semicircle, and the slanting beams of sunset touched the broadside of the canoe with a fiery glow, throwing the slender and distorted shadows of its crew upon the streaked glitter of the river. The white man turned to look ahead. The course of the boat had been altered at right angles to the stream, and the carved dragonhead on its prow was pointing now at a gap in the fringing bushes of the bank. It

glided through, brushing the overhanging twigs, and disappeared from the river like some slim and amphibious creature leaving the water for its lair in the forests.

The narrow creek was like a ditch: tortuous, fabulously deep; filled with gloom under the thin strip of pure and shining blue of the heaven. Immense trees soared up, invisible behind the festooned draperies of creepers. Here and there, near the glistening blackness of the water, a twisted root of some tall tree showed among the tracery of small ferns, black and dull, writhing and motionless, like an arrested snake. The short words of the paddlers reverberated loudly between the thick and somber walls of vegetation. Darkness oozed out from between the trees, through the tangled maze of the creepers, from behind the great fantastic and unstirring leaves; the darkness, mysterious and invincible; the darkness scented and poisonous of impenetrable forests.

The men poled in the shoaling water. The creek broadened, opening out into a wide sweep of a stagnant lagoon. The forests receded from the marshy bank, leaving a level strip of bright green, reedy grass to frame the reflected blueness of the sky. A fleecy pink cloud drifted high above, trailing the delicate coloring of its image under the floating leaves and the silvery blossoms of the lotus. A little house, perched on high piles, appeared black in the distance. Near it, two



tall nibong palms, that seemed to have come out of the forests in the background, leaned slightly over the ragged roof, with a suggestion of sadness and care in the droop of their leafy and soaring heads.

The steersman, pointing with his paddle, said, "Arsat is there. I see his canoe fast between the piles."

The polers ran along the sides of the boat glancing over their shoulders at the end of the day's journey. They would have preferred to spend the night somewhere else than on this lagoon of weird aspect and ghostly reputation. Moreover, they disliked Arsat, first as a stranger, and also because he who repairs a ruined house, and dwells in it, proclaims that he is not afraid to live amongst the spirits that haunt the places abandoned by mankind. Such a man can disturb the course of fate by glances or words; while his familiar ghosts are not easy to pro-

pitiate by casual wayfarers upon whom they long to wreak the malice of their human master. White men care not for such things, being unbelievers and in league with the Father of Evil, who leads them unharmed through the invisible dangers of this world. To the warnings of the righteous they oppose an offensive pretense of disbelief. What is there to be done?

So they thought, throwing their weight on the end of their long poles. The big canoe glided on swiftly, noiselessly, and smoothly, toward Arsat's clearing, till, in a great rattling of poles thrown down, and the loud murmurs of "Allah be praised!" it came with a gentle knock against the crooked piles below the house.

The boatmen with uplifted faces shouted discordantly, "Arsat! O Arsat!" Nobody came. The white man began to climb the rude ladder

giving access to the bamboo platform before the house. The juragan¹ of the boat said sulkily, "We will cook in the sampan, and sleep on the water."

"Pass my blankets and the basket," said the white man, curtly.

He knelt on the edge of the platform to receive the bundle. Then the boat shoved off, and the white man, standing up, confronted Arsat, who had come out through the low door of his hut. He was a man young, powerful, with broad chest and muscular arms. He had nothing on but his sarong. His head was bare. His big, soft eyes stared eagerly at the white man, but his voice and demeanor were composed as he asked, without any words of greeting:

"Have you medicine, Tuan?"²

"No," said the visitor in a startled tone. "No. Why? Is there sickness in the house?"

"Enter and see," replied Arsat, in the same calm manner, and turning short round, passed again through the small doorway. The white man, dropping his bundles, followed.

In the dim light of the dwelling he made out on a couch of bamboos a woman stretched on her back under a broad sheet of red cotton cloth. She lay still, as if dead; but her big eyes, wide open, glittered in the gloom, staring upward at the slender rafters, motionless and unseeing. She was in a high fever, and evidently unconscious. Her cheeks were sunk slightly, her lips were

partly open, and on the young face there was the ominous and fixed expression—the absorbed, contemplating expression of the unconscious who are going to die. The two men stood looking down at her in silence.

"Has she been long ill?" asked the traveler.

"I have not slept for five nights," answered the Malay, in a deliberate tone. "At first she heard voices calling her from the water and struggled against me who held her. But since the sun of today rose she hears nothing—she hears not me. She

¹*juragan*. The head man or leader.

²*Tuan*. Master.



sees nothing. She sees not me—me!”

He remained silent for a minute, then asked softly:

“Tuan, will she die?”

“I fear so,” said the white man, sorrowfully. He had known Arsat years ago, in a far country in times of trouble and danger, when no friendship is to be despised. And since his Malay friend had come unexpectedly to dwell in the hut on the lagoon with a strange woman, he had slept many times there, in his journeys up and down the river. He liked the man who knew how to keep faith in council and how to fight without fear by the side of his white friend. He liked him—not so much perhaps as a man likes his favorite dog—but still he liked him well enough to help and ask no questions, to think sometimes vaguely and hazily in the midst of his own pursuits, about the lonely man and the long-haired woman with audacious face and triumphant eyes, who

lived together hidden by the forests—alone and feared.

The white man came out of the hut in time to see the enormous conflagration of sunset put out by the swift and stealthy shadows that, rising like a black and impalpable vapor above the treetops, spread over the heaven, extinguishing the crimson glow of floating clouds and the red brilliance of departing daylight. In a few moments all the stars came out above the intense blackness of the earth and the great lagoon gleaming suddenly with reflected lights resembled an oval patch of night sky flung down into the hopeless and abysmal night of the wilderness. The white man had some supper out of the basket, then collecting a few sticks that lay about the platform, made up a small fire, not for warmth, but for the sake of the smoke, which would keep off the mosquitoes. He wrapped himself in the blankets and sat with his back against the reed wall of the house, smoking thoughtfully.

ArSAT came through the doorway with noiseless steps and squatted down by the fire. The white man moved his outstretched legs a little.

“She breathes,” said ArSAT in a low voice, anticipating the expected question. “She breathes and burns as if with a great fire. She speaks not; she hears not—and burns!”

He paused for a moment, then asked in a quiet, incurious tone:

“Tuan . . . will she die?”

The white man moved his



shoulders uneasily and muttered in a hesitating manner:

"If such is her fate."

"No, Tuan," said Arsats, calmly. "If such is my fate. I hear, I see, I wait. I remember . . . Tuan, do you remember the old days? Do you remember my brother?"

"Yes," said the white man. The Malay rose suddenly and went in. The other, sitting still outside, could hear the voice in the hut. Arsats said: "Hear me! Speak!" His words were succeeded by a complete silence. "O Diamelen!" he cried, suddenly. After that cry there was a deep sigh. Arsats came out and sank down again in his old place.

They sat in silence before the fire. There was no sound within the house, there was no sound near them; but far away on the lagoon they could hear the voices of the boatmen ringing fitful and distinct on the calm water. The fire in the bows of the sampan shone faintly in the distance with a hazy red glow. Then it died out. The voices ceased. The land and the water slept invisible, unstirring, and mute. It was as though there had been nothing left in the world but the glitter of stars streaming, ceaseless and vain, through the black stillness of the night.

The white man gazed straight before him into the darkness with wide-open eyes. The fear and fascination, the inspiration and the wonder of death—of death near, unavoida-

ble, and unseen, soothed the unrest of his race and stirred the most indistinct, the most intimate of his thoughts. The ever-ready suspicion of evil, the gnawing suspicion that lurks in our hearts, flowed out into the stillness round him—into the stillness profound and dumb, and made it appear untrustworthy and infamous, like the placid and impenetrable mask of an unjustifiable violence. In that fleeting and powerful disturbance of his being, the earth enfolded in the starlight peace became a shadowy country of inhuman strife, a battlefield of phantoms terrible and charming, august or ignoble, struggling ardently for the possession of our helpless hearts. An unquiet and mysterious country of inextinguishable desires and fears.

A plaintive murmur rose in the night; a murmur saddening and startling, as if the great solitudes of surrounding woods had tried to whisper into his ear the wisdom of their immense and lofty indifference. Sounds hesitating and vague floated in the air round him, shaped themselves slowly into words; and at last flowed on gently in a murmuring stream of soft and monotonous sentences. He stirred like a man waking up and changed his position slightly. Arsats, motionless and shadowy, sitting with bowed head under the stars, was speaking in a low and dreamy tone:

" . . . for where can we lay down the heaviness of our trouble but in a friend's heart? A man must speak

of war and of love. You, Tuan, know what war is, and you have seen me in time of danger seek death as other men seek life! A writing may be lost; a lie may be written; but what the eye has seen is truth and remains in the mind!"

"I remember," said the white man, quietly. Arsat went on with mournful composure:

"Therefore I shall speak to you of love. Speak in the night. Speak before both night and love are gone, and the eye of day looks upon my sorrow and my shame; upon my blackened face; upon my burnt-up heart."

A sigh, short and faint, marked an almost imperceptible pause, and then his words flowed on, without a stir, without a gesture.

"After the time of trouble and war was over and you went away from my country in the pursuit of your desires, which we, men of the islands, cannot understand, I and my brother became again, as we had been before, the sword-bearers of the Ruler. You know we were men of family, belonging to a ruling race, and more fit than any to carry on our right shoulder the emblem of power. And in the time of prosperity Si Dendring showed us favor, as we, in time of sorrow, had showed to him the faithfulness of our courage. It was a time of peace. A time of deer hunts and cockfights; of idle talks and foolish squabbles between men whose bellies are full and weapons are rusty. But the

sower watched the young rice shoots grow up without fear, and the traders came and went, departed lean and returned fat into the river of peace. They brought news, too. Brought lies and truth mixed together, so that no man knew when to rejoice and when to be sorry. We heard from them about you also. They had seen you here and had seen you there. And I was glad to hear, for I remembered the stirring times, and I always remembered you, Tuan, till the time came when my eyes could see nothing in the past, because they had looked upon the one who is dying there—in the house."

He stopped to exclaim in an intense whisper, "O Mara bahia! O Calamity!" then went on speaking a little louder:

"There's no worse enemy and no better friend than a brother, Tuan, for one brother knows another, and in perfect knowledge is strength for good or evil. I loved my brother. I went to him and told him that I could see nothing but one face, hear nothing but one voice. He told me: 'Open your heart so that she can see what is in it—and wait. Patience is wisdom. Inchi Midah may die or our Ruler may throw off his fear of a woman!' . . . I waited—. . . You remember the lady with the veiled face, Tuan, and the fear of our Ruler before her cunning and temper. And if she wanted her servant, what could I do? But I fed the hunger of my heart on short glances and

stealthy words. I loitered on the path to the bathhouses in the daytime, and when the sun had fallen behind the forest I crept along the jasmine hedges of the women's courtyard. Unseeing, we spoke to one another through the scent of flowers, through the veil of leaves, through the blades of long grass that stood still before our lips; so great was our prudence, so faint was the murmur of our great longing. The time passed swiftly . . . and there were whispers among women—and our enemies watched—my brother was gloomy, and I began to think of killing and of a fierce death. . . . We are of a people who take what they want—like you whites. There is a time when a man should forget loyalty and respect. Might and authority are given to rulers, but to all men is given love and strength and courage. My brother said, 'You shall take her from their midst. We are two who are like one.' And I answered, 'Let it be soon, for I find no warmth in sunlight that does not shine upon her.' Our time came when the Ruler and all the great people went to the mouth of the river to fish by torchlight. There were hundreds of boats, and on the white sand, between the water and the forests, dwellings of leaves were built for the households of the Rajahs. The smoke of cooking fires was like a blue mist of the evening, and many voices rang in it joyfully. While they were making the boats ready to beat up the fish,



my brother came to me and said, 'Tonight!' I looked to my weapons, and when the time came our canoe took its place in the circle of boats carrying the torches. The lights blazed on the water, but behind the boats there was darkness. When the shouting began and the excitement made them like mad we dropped out. The water swallowed our fire, and we floated back to the shore that was dark with only here and there the glimmer of embers. We could hear the talk of slave girls among the sheds. Then we found a place deserted and silent. We waited there. She came. She came running along the shore, rapid and leaving no trace, like a leaf driven by the wind into the sea. My brother said gloomily, 'Go and take her; carry her into our boat.' I lifted her in my arms. She panted. Her heart was beating against my breast. I said, 'I take you from those people. You came to the cry



of my heart, but my arms take you into my boat against the will of the great! 'It is right,' said my brother. 'We are men who take what we want and can hold it against many. We should have taken her in daylight.' I said, 'Let us be off'; for since she was in my boat I began to think of our Ruler's many men. 'Yes. Let us be off,' said my brother. 'We are cast out and this boat is our country now—and the sea is our refuge.' He lingered with his foot on the shore, and I entreated him to hasten, for I remembered the strokes of her heart against my breast and thought that two men cannot withstand a hundred. We left, paddling downstream close to the bank; and as we passed by the creek where they were fishing, the great shouting had ceased, but the murmur of voices was loud like the humming of insects flying at noonday. The boats floated, clustered together, in the red light of torches, under a black roof of smoke; and men talked of their sport. Men that boasted, and praised, and jeered—men that would have been our friends in the morn-

ing, but on that night were already our enemies. We paddled swiftly past. We had no more friends in the country of our birth. She sat in the middle of the canoe with covered face, silent as she is now, unseeing as she is now; and I had no regret at what I was leaving, because I could hear her breathing close to me, as I can hear her now."

He paused, listened with his ear turned to the doorway, then shook his head and went on:

"My brother wanted to shout the cry of challenge,—one cry only,—to let the people know we were free-born robbers who trusted our arms and the great sea. And again I begged him in the name of our love to be silent. Could I not hear her breathing close to me? I knew the pursuit would come quick enough. My brother loved me. He dipped his paddle without a splash. He only said, 'There is a half a man in you now—the other half is in that woman. I can wait. When you are a whole man again, you will come back with me here to shout defiance. We are sons of the same

mother.' I made no answer. All my strength and all my spirit were in my hands that held the paddle—for I longed to be with her in a safe place beyond the reach of men's anger and of women's spite. My love was so great, that I thought it could guide me to a country where death was unknown, if I could only escape from Inchi Midah's fury and from our Ruler's sword. We paddled with haste, breathing through our teeth. The blades bit deep into the smooth water. We passed out of the river; we flew in clear channels among the shallows. We skirted the black coast; we skirted the sand beaches where the sea speaks in whispers to the land; and the gleam of white sand flashed back past our boat, so swiftly she ran upon the water. We spoke not. Only once I said, 'Sleep, Diamelen, for soon you may want all your strength.' I heard the sweetness of her voice, but I never turned my head. The sun rose and still we went on. Water fell from my face like rain from a cloud. We flew in the light and heat. I never looked back, but I knew that my brother's eyes, behind me, were looking steadily ahead, for the boat went as straight as a bushman's dart, when it leaves the end of the sumpitan.³ There was no better paddler, no better steersman than my brother. Many times, together, we had won races in that canoe. But we never had put out our strength as we did then—then, when for the last time

we paddled together! There was no braver or stronger man in our country than my brother. I could not spare the strength to turn my head and look at him, but every moment I heard the hiss of his breath getting louder behind me. Still he did not speak. The sun was high. The heat clung to my back like a flame of fire. My ribs were ready to burst, but I could no longer get enough air into my chest. And then I felt I must cry out with my last breath, 'Let us rest!' . . . 'Good!' he answered; and his voice was firm. He was strong. He was brave. He knew not fear and no fatigue. . . . My brother!"

A murmur powerful and gentle, a murmur vast and faint; the murmur of trembling leaves, of stirring boughs, ran through the tangled depths of the forests, ran over the starry smoothness of the lagoon, and the water between the piles lapped the slimy timber once with a sudden splash. A breath of warm air touched the two men's faces and passed on with a mournful sound—a breath loud and short like an uneasy sigh of the dreaming earth.

Arsat went on in an even, low voice.

"We ran our canoe on the white beach of a little bay close to a long tongue of land that seemed to bar our road; a long wooded cape going far into the sea. My brother knew that place. Beyond the cape a river

³*sumpitan*. A blowgun.

has its entrance, and through the jungle of that land there is a narrow path. We made a fire and cooked rice. Then we lay down to sleep on the soft sand in the shade of our canoe, while she watched. No sooner had I closed my eyes than I heard her cry of alarm. We leaped up. The sun was halfway down the sky already, and coming in sight in the opening of the bay we saw a prau⁴ manned by many paddlers. We knew it at once; it was one of our Rajah's praus. They were watching the shore, and saw us. They beat the gong, and turned the head of the prau into the bay. I felt my heart become weak within my breast. Diamelen sat on the sand and covered her face. There was no escape by sea. My brother laughed. He had the gun you had given him, Tuan, before you went away, but there was only a handful of powder. He spoke to me quickly: 'Run with her along the path. I shall keep them back, for they have no firearms, and landing in the face of a man with a gun is certain death for some. Run with her. On the other side of that wood there is a fisherman's house—and a canoe. When I have fired all the shots I will follow. I am a great runner, and before they can come up we shall be gone. I will hold out as long as I can, for she is but a woman—that can neither run nor fight, but she has your heart in her

weak hands.' He dropped behind the canoe. The prau was coming. She and I ran, and as we rushed along the path I heard shots. My brother fired—once—twice—and the booming of the gong ceased. There was silence behind us. That neck of land is narrow. Before I heard my brother fire the third shot I saw the shelving shore, and I saw the water again; the mouth of a broad river. We crossed a grassy glade. We ran down to the water. I saw a low hut above the black mud, and a small canoe hauled up. I heard another shot behind me. I thought, 'That is his last charge.' We rushed down to the canoe; a man came running from the hut, but I leaped on him, and we rolled together in the mud. Then I got up, and he lay still at my feet. I don't know whether I had killed him or not. I and Diamelen pushed the canoe afloat. I heard yells behind me, and I saw my brother run across the glade. Many men were bounding after him. I took her in my arms and threw her into the boat, then leaped in myself. When I looked back I saw that my brother had fallen. He fell and was up again, but the men were closing round him. He shouted, 'I am coming!' The men were close to him. I looked. Many men. Then I looked at her. Tuan, I pushed the canoe! I pushed it into deep water. She was kneeling forward looking at me, and I said, 'Take your paddle,' while I struck the water with mine.

⁴*prau*. A boat built for speed.

Tuan, I heard him cry. I heard him cry my name twice; and I heard voices shouting, 'Kill! Strike!' I never turned back. I heard him calling my name again with a great shriek, as when life is going out together with the voice—and I never turned my head. My own name! . . . My brother! Three times he called—but I was not afraid of life. Was she not there in that canoe? And could I not with her find a country

where death is forgotten—where death is unknown!"

The white man sat up. Arsath rose and stood, an indistinct and silent figure above the dying embers of the fire. Over the lagoon a mist drifting and low had crept, erasing slowly the glittering images of the stars. And now a great expanse of white vapor covered the land: it flowed cold and gray in the darkness, eddied in noiseless whirls round the



tree trunks and about the platform of the house, which seemed to float upon a restless and impalpable illusion of a sea. Only far away the tops of the trees stood outlined on the twinkle of heaven, like a somber and forbidding shore—a coast deceptive, pitless and black.

Arsat's voice vibrated loudly in the profound peace.

"I had her there! I had her! To get her I would have faced all mankind. But I had her—and—"

His words went out ringing into the empty distances. He paused, and seemed to listen to them dying away very far—beyond help and beyond recall. Then he said quietly:

"Tuan, I loved my brother."

A breath of wind made him shiver. High above his head, high above the silent sea of mist the drooping leaves of the palms rattled together with a mournful and expiring sound. The white man stretched his legs. His chin rested on his chest, and he murmured sadly without lifting his head:

"We all love our brothers."

Arsat burst out with an intense whispering violence—

"What did I care who died? I wanted peace in my own heart."

He seemed to hear a stir in the house—listened—then stepped in noiselessly. The white man stood up. A breeze was coming in fitful puffs. The stars shone paler as if they had retreated into the frozen depths of immense space. After a chill gust of wind there were a few seconds of perfect calm and absolute silence. Then from behind the black and wavy line of the forests a column of golden light shot up into the heavens and spread over the semicircle of the eastern horizon. The sun had risen. The mist lifted, broke into drifting patches, vanished into thin flying wreaths; and the unveiled lagoon lay, polished and black, in the heavy shadows at the foot of the wall of trees. A white eagle rose over it with a slanting and ponderous flight, reached the clear sunshine and appeared daz- zlingly brilliant for a moment, then soaring higher, became a dark and motionless speck before it vanished into the blue as if it had left the earth forever. The white man, standing gazing upward before the doorway, heard in the hut a confused and broken murmur of distracted words ending with a loud groan. Suddenly Arsat stumbled out with outstretched hands, shivered, and stood still for some time with fixed eyes. Then he said:

"She burns no more."



Before his face the sun showed its edge above the treetops rising steadily. The breeze freshened; a great brilliance burst upon the lagoon, sparkled on the rippling water. The forests came out of the clear shadows of the morning, became distinct, as if they had rushed nearer—to stop short in a great stir of leaves, of nodding boughs, of swaying branches. In the merciless sunshine the whisper of unconscious life grew louder, speaking in an incomprehensible voice round the dumb darkness of that human sorrow. Arsat's eyes wandered slowly, then stared at the rising sun.

"I can see nothing," he said half aloud to himself.

"There is nothing," said the white man, moving to the edge of the platform and waving his hand to his boat. A shout came faintly over the lagoon and the sampan began to glide toward the abode of the friend of ghosts.

"If you want to come with me, I will wait all the morning," said the white man, looking away upon the water.

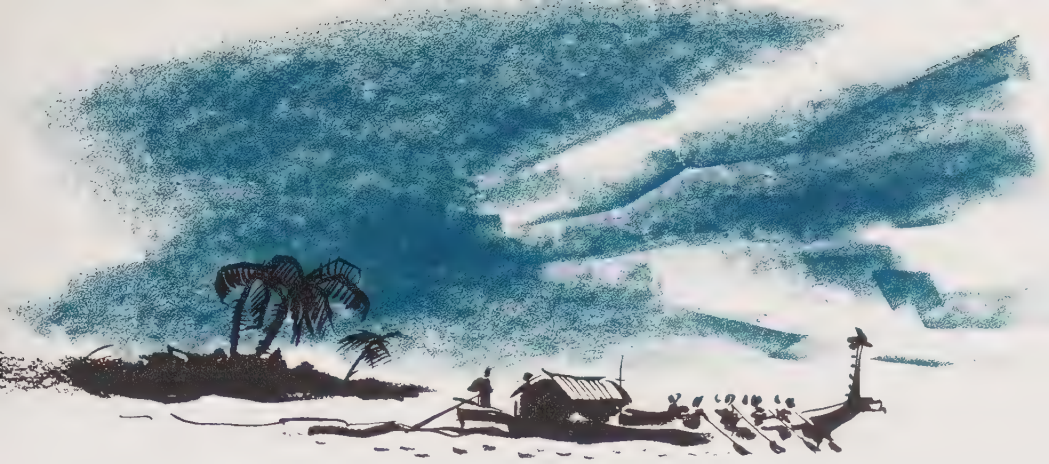
"No, Tuan," said Arsat, softly. "I shall not eat or sleep in this house, but I must first see my road. Now I can see nothing—see nothing! There is no light and no peace in the world; but there is death—death for many. We are sons of the same mother—and I left him in the midst of enemies; but I am going back now."



He drew a long breath and went on in a dreamy tone:

"In a little while I shall see clear enough to strike—to strike. But she has died, and . . . now . . . darkness."

He flung his arms wide open, let them fall along his body, then stood still with unmoved face and stony eyes, staring at the sun. The white man got down into his canoe. The polers ran smartly along the sides of the boat, looking over their shoulders at the beginning of a weary journey. High in the stern, his head muffled up in white rags, the juragan sat moody, letting his paddle trail in the water. The white man, leaning with both arms over the grass roof of the little cabin, looked at the shining ripple of the boat's wake. Before the sampan passed out of the lagoon into the creek he lifted his eyes. Arsat had not moved. He stood lonely in the searching sunshine; and he looked beyond the great light of a cloudless day into the darkness of a world of illusions.



Discussion

1. What does Conrad gain by making “The Lagoon” a story within a story? What purpose is served by the long introduction?
2. Why do the natives prefer to spend the night in the sampan?
3. Relate briefly the story of Arsat’s elopement. Why does he tell the story to the Tuan?
4. Why has Arsat’s life not been as happy as he had expected? What unpleasant consequences may follow an elopement in our civilization?
5. What do you make of Arsat’s comment, “There’s no worse enemy and no better friend than a brother”?
6. Why had Arsat’s brother wanted to shout defiance?
7. What admirable qualities do Arsat and his brother reveal?
8. What criticism of our civilization is implied in Arsat’s remark, “We are of a people who take what they want—like *you whites*”?
9. What is “the darkness of a world of illusions” into which Arsat is looking at the end of the story? What, in your opinion, will he do?
10. What makes this story a tragedy? Do not jump to the obvious conclusion that it is Diamelen’s death.

Research

If this story impresses you, you will be pleased to know that Conrad has written many more like it. Among his collections of short stories are *Youth*, *Typhoon*, and *Tales of Unrest*. Two of his novels you might like are *Victory* and *Lord Jim*.

W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM 1874-



WILLIAM SOMERSET MAUGHAM was born in Paris, of English parents. His father was a lawyer. Left an orphan at ten, William was sent to England to live with an uncle who was the vicar at Whitstable, in Kent. There, in stern surroundings, young Maugham spent an unhappy adolescence. He studied at King's School, Canterbury, and for a year at Heidelberg University in Germany. At the insistence of his uncle, he then studied medicine at St. Thomas' Hospital in London. After a year's internship in the London slums he contracted tuberculosis. To recuperate, and also to follow his own desire to write, Maugham went to France.

Success was slow in coming. It was a novel based, in part at least, on his own unhappy youth which brought recognition at last. The novel was *Of Human Bondage*, published in 1915. It is today generally considered one of the great novels of the twentieth century.

When World War I broke out, Maugham served first with the Red Cross and then in the British Intelligence Service. The latter experience resulted in *British Agent*, published in 1928. After the war Maugham traveled extensively in the South Pacific and the Far East. Out of these travels grew his many stories dealing with the problems of white people living in the Orient. For *Cakes and Ale*, published in 1930, he returned to the England of his youth. A rather satiric treatment of literary life, this novel is generally assumed to be based on the early life of Thomas Hardy.

A popular theme in Maugham's short stories is the unpredictability of human behavior. Although Maugham is a realist, he does not copy life. He arranges it dramatically so it will interest and surprise the reader. Often there is a vein of irony in the turn of events. The heroes of Maugham's stories are likely to be lower- or middle-class people. The verger in the story of the same title is the man who takes care of a church. Although in America he would be called a custodian or janitor, the British equivalent carries more prestige.

"The Verger" is an example of Maugham's skill in character delineation and plot construction, with a perfectly prepared for surprise ending. Every detail in the story counts. Every bit of dialogue moves the story forward.



The Verger

There had been a christening that afternoon at St. Peter's, Neville Square, and Albert Edward Foreman still wore his verger's gown. He kept his new one, its folds as full and stiff as though it were made not of alpaca but of perennial bronze, for funerals and weddings (St. Peter's, Neville Square, was a church much favored by the fashionable for these ceremonies), and now he wore only his second best. He wore it with complacency; for it was the dignified symbol of his office, and without it (when he took it off to go home) he had the disconcerting sensation of being somewhat insufficiently clad. He took pains with it; he pressed it and ironed it himself. During the sixteen years he had been verger of this church he had had a succession of such gowns; but he had never been able to throw them away when they were worn out, and the complete series, neatly wrapped up in brown paper, lay in the bottom drawer of the wardrobe in his bedroom.

The verger busied himself quietly, replacing the painted wooden cover



on the marble font, taking away a chair that had been brought for an infirm old lady, and waited for the vicar to have finished in the vestry so that he could tidy up in there and

"The Verger" is from *The Cosmopolitans*, by W. Somerset Maugham. Copyright 1929 by W. Somerset Maugham. Reprinted by permission of Doubleday & Company, Inc.

go home. Presently he saw him walk across the chancel, genuflect in front of the high altar, and come down the aisle; but he still wore his cassock.

"What's he 'anging about for?" the verger said to himself. "Don't 'e know I want my tea?"

The vicar had been but recently appointed, a red-faced, energetic man in his early forties, and Albert Edward still regretted his predecessor, a clergyman of the old school who preached leisurely sermons in a silvery voice and dined out a great deal with his more aristocratic parishioners. He liked things in church to be just so, but he never fussed; he was not like this new man who wanted to have his finger in every pie. But Albert Edward was tolerant. St. Peter's was in a very good neighborhood and the parishioners were a very nice class of people. The new vicar had come from the East End, and he couldn't be expected to fall in all at once with the discreet ways of his fashionable congregation.

"All this 'ustle," said Albert Edward. "But give 'im time; he'll learn."

When the vicar had walked down the aisle so far that he could address the verger without raising his voice more than was becoming in a place of worship, he stopped.

"Foreman, will you come into the vestry for a minute? I have something to say to you."

"Very good, sir."

The vicar waited for him to come up and they walked up the church together.

"A very nice christening, I thought, sir. Funny 'ow the baby stopped cryin' the moment you took him."

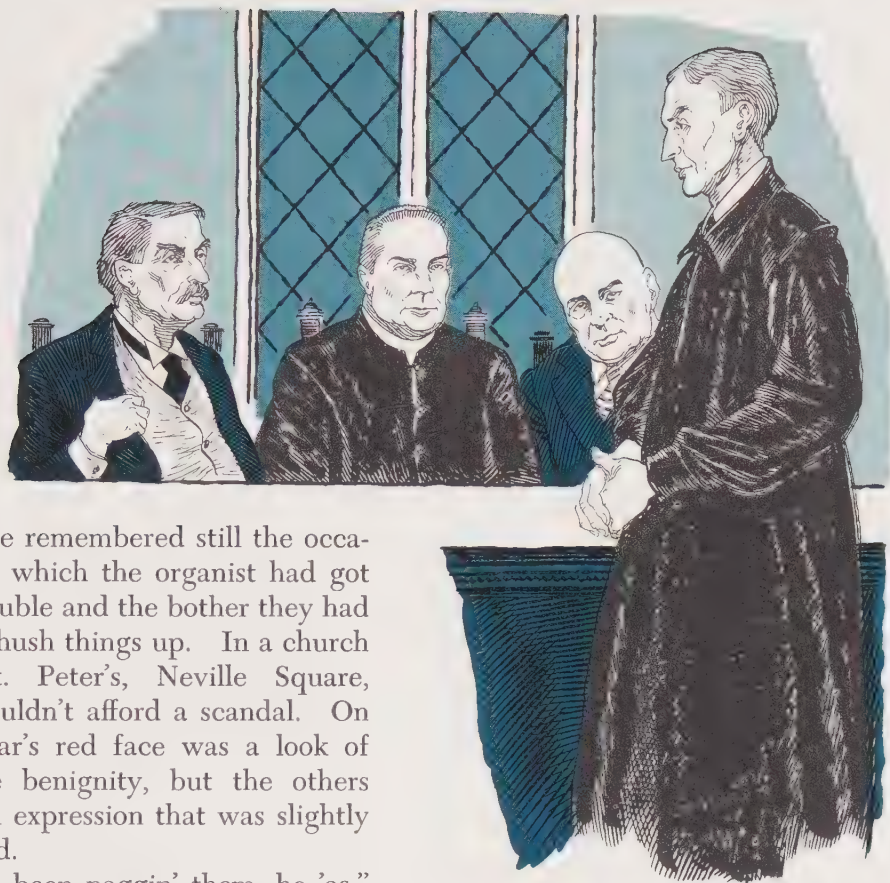
"I've noticed they very often do," said the vicar, with a little smile. "After all, I've had a good deal of practice with them."

It was a source of subdued pride to him that he could nearly always quiet a whimpering infant by the manner in which he held it, and he was not unconscious of the amused admiration with which mothers and nurses watched him settle the baby in the crook of his surpliced arm. The verger knew that it pleased him to be complimented on his talent.

The vicar preceded Albert Edward into the vestry. Albert Edward was a trifle surprised to find the two churchwardens there. He had not seen them come in. They gave him pleasant nods.

"Good afternoon, my lord. Good afternoon, sir," he said to one after the other.

They were elderly men, both of them, and they had been churchwardens almost as long as Albert Edward had been verger. They were sitting now at a handsome refectory table that the old vicar had brought many years before from Italy, and the vicar sat down in the vacant chair between them. Albert Edward faced them, the table between him and them, and wondered with slight uneasiness what was the mat-



ter. He remembered still the occasion on which the organist had got into trouble and the bother they had had to hush things up. In a church like St. Peter's, Neville Square, they couldn't afford a scandal. On the vicar's red face was a look of resolute benignity, but the others bore an expression that was slightly troubled.

"He's been naggin' them, he 'as," said the verger to himself. "He's jockeyed them into doin' something, but they don't 'alf like it. That's what it is; you mark my words."

But his thoughts did not appear on Albert Edward's clean-cut and distinguished features. He stood in a respectful but not obsequious attitude. He had been in service before he was appointed to his ecclesiastical office, but only in very good houses, and his deportment was irreproachable. Starting as a page-boy in the household of a merchant prince, he had risen by due degrees from the position of fourth to first footman; for a year he had been sin-

glehanded butler to a widowed peeress and, till the vacancy occurred at St. Peter's, butler with two men under him in the house of a retired ambassador. He was tall, spare, grave, and dignified. He looked, if not like a duke, at least like an actor of the old school who specialized in dukes' parts. He had tact, firmness, and self-assurance. His character was unimpeachable.

The vicar began briskly.

"Foreman, we've got something rather unpleasant to say to you. You've been here a great many years,

and I think his lordship and the general agree with me that you've fulfilled the duties of your office to the satisfaction of everybody concerned."

The two churchwardens nodded.

"But a most extraordinary circumstance came to my knowledge the other day and I felt it my duty to impart it to the churchwardens. I discovered to my astonishment that you could neither read nor write."

The verger's face betrayed no sign of embarrassment.

"The last vicar knew that, sir," he replied. "He said it didn't make no difference. He always said there was a great deal too much education in the world for 'is taste."

"It's the most amazing thing I ever heard," cried the general. "Do you mean to say that you've been verger of this church for sixteen years and never learned to read or write?"

"I went into service when I was twelve, sir. The cook in the first place tried to teach me once; but I didn't seem to 'ave the knack for it, and then what with one thing and another I never seemed to 'ave the time. I've never really found the want of it. I think a lot of these young fellows waste a lot of time readin' when they might be doin' something useful."

"But don't you want to know the news?" said the other churchwarden. "Don't you ever want to write a letter?"

"No, me lord, I seem to manage very well without. And of late

years, now they've all these pictures in the papers. I get to know what's goin' on pretty well. Me wife's quite a scholar, and if I want to write a letter she writes it for me. It's not as if I was a bettin' man."

The two churchwardens gave the vicar a troubled glance and then looked down at the table.

"Well, Foreman, I've talked the matter over with these gentlemen and they quite agree with me that the situation is impossible. At a church like St. Peter's, Neville Square, we cannot have a verger who can neither read nor write."

Albert Edward's thin, sallow face reddened and he moved uneasily on his feet, but he made no reply.

"Understand me, Foreman, I have no complaint to make against you. You do your work quite satisfactorily. I have the highest opinion both of your character and of your capacity, but we haven't the right to take the risk of some accident that might happen owing to your lamentable ignorance. It's a matter of prudence as well as of principle."

"But couldn't you learn, Foreman?" asked the general.



"No, sir, I'm afraid I couldn't—not now. You see, I'm not as young as I was, and, if I couldn't seem able to get the letters in me 'ead when I was a nipper, I don't think there's much chance of it now."

"We don't want to be harsh with you, Foreman," said the vicar. "But the churchwardens and I have quite made up our minds. We'll give you three months, and if at the end of that time you cannot read and write I'm afraid you'll have to go."

Albert Edward had never liked the new vicar. He'd said from the beginning that they'd made a mistake when they gave him St. Peter's. He wasn't the type of man they wanted with a classy congregation like that. And now he straightened himself a little. He knew his value and he wasn't going to allow himself to be put upon.

"I'm very sorry, sir; I'm afraid it's no good. I'm too old a dog to learn new tricks. I've lived a good many years without knowin' 'ow to read and write, and without wishin' to praise myself—self-praise is no commendation—I don't mind sayin' I've done my duty in that state of life in which it 'as pleased a merciful providence to place me, and if I *could* learn now I don't know as I'd want to."

"In that case, Foreman, I'm afraid you must go."

"Yes, sir, I quite understand. I shall be 'appy to 'and in my resignation as soon as you've found somebody to take my place."

But when Albert Edward, with his usual politeness, had closed the church door behind the vicar and the two churchwardens, he could not sustain the air of unruffled dignity with which he had borne the blow inflicted upon him, and his lips quivered. He walked slowly back to the vestry and hung up on its proper peg his verger's gown. He sighed as he thought of all the grand funerals and smart weddings it had seen. He tidied everything up, put on his coat, and hat in hand walked down the aisle. He locked the church door behind him. He strolled across the square; but, deep in his sad thoughts, he did not take the street that led him home, where a nice strong cup of tea awaited him—he took the wrong turning.

He walked slowly along. His heart was heavy. He did not know what he should do with himself. He did not fancy the notion of going back to domestic service; after being his own master for so many years—for the vicar and churchwardens could say what they liked; it was he that had run St. Peter's, Neville Square—he could scarcely demean himself by accepting a situation. He had saved a tidy sum, but not enough to live on without doing something; and life seemed to cost more every year. He had never thought to be troubled with such questions. The vergers of St. Peter's, like the popes of Rome, were there for life. He had often thought of the pleasant reference the vicar

would make, in his sermon at evensong the first Sunday after his death, to the long and faithful service and the exemplary character of their late verger, Albert Edward Foreman.

He sighed deeply. Albert Edward was a nonsmoker and a total abstainer, but with a certain latitude; that is to say, he liked a glass of beer with his dinner and when he was tired he enjoyed a cigarette. It occurred to him now that one would comfort him and, since he did not carry them, he looked about him for a shop where he could buy a packet of Gold Flakes. He did not at once see one and walked on a little. It was a long street, with all sorts of shops in it; but there was not a single one where you could buy cigarettes.

"That's strange," said Albert Edward.

To make sure, he walked right up the street again. No, there was no doubt about it. He stopped and looked reflectively up and down.

"I can't be the only man as walks along this street and wants a fag," he said. "I shouldn't wonder but what a fellow might do very well with a little shop here. Tobacco and sweets, you know."

He gave a sudden start.

"That's an idea," he said. "Strange 'ow things come to you when you least expect it."

He turned, walked home, and had his tea.

"You're very silent this afternoon, Albert," his wife remarked.

"I'm thinkin'," he said.

He considered the matter from every point of view, and next day he went along the street and by good luck found a little shop to let that looked as though it would exactly suit him. Twenty-four hours later he had taken it and, when a month after that he left St. Peter's, Neville Square, forever, Albert Edward Foreman set up in business as a tobacconist and newsagent. His wife said it was a dreadful comedown after being verger of St. Peter's; but he answered that you had to move with the times, the church wasn't what it was, and 'enceforward he was going to render unto Caesar¹ what was Caesar's. Albert Edward did very well. He did so well that in a year or so it struck him that he might take a second shop and put a manager in. He looked for another long street that hadn't got a tobacconist in it and when he found it, and a shop to let, took it and stocked it. This was a success too. Then it occurred to him that if he could run two he could run half a dozen; so he began walking about London, and whenever he found a long street that had no tobacconist, and a shop to let, he took it. In the course of ten years he had acquired no less than ten shops and he was making money hand over fist.

¹*render unto Caesar.* The reference is to Matthew 22:21: "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's." Having served God, Albert Edward is now going to serve man.

He went round to all of them himself every Monday, collected the week's takings and took them to the bank.

One morning when he was there, paying in a bundle of notes and a heavy bag of silver, the cashier told him that the manager would like to see him. He was shown into an office and the manager shook hands with him.

"Mr. Foreman, I wanted to have a talk to you about the money you've got on deposit with us. D'you know exactly how much it is?"

"Not within a pound or two, sir; but I've got a pretty rough idea."

"Apart from what you paid in this morning, it's a little over thirty thousand pounds. That's a very large sum to have on deposit and I should have thought you'd do better to invest it."

"I wouldn't want to take no risk, sir. I know it's safe in the bank."

"You needn't have the least anxiety. We'll make you out a list of absolutely gilt-edged securities. They'll bring you in a better rate of interest than we can possibly afford to give you."

A troubled look settled on Mr. Foreman's distinguished face.

"I've never 'ad anything to do with stocks and shares and I'd 'ave to leave it all in your 'ands," he said.

The manager smiled.

"We'll do everything. All you'll have to do next time you come in is just to sign the transfers."

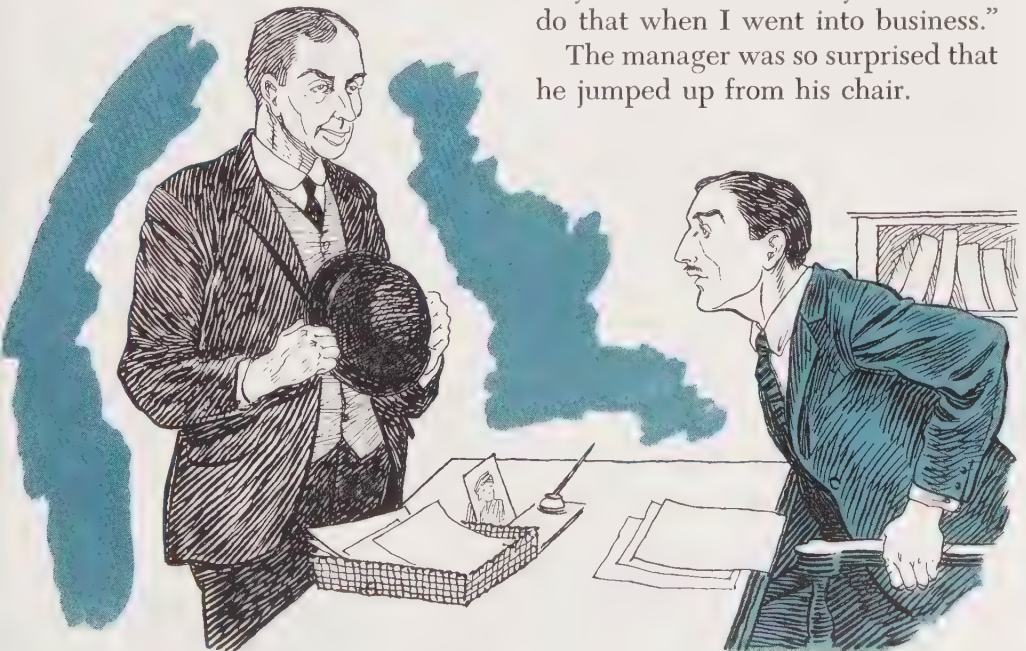
"I could do that all right," said Albert uncertainly. "But 'ow should I know what I was signin'?"

"I suppose you can read," said the manager a trifle sharply.

Mr. Foreman gave him a disarming smile.

"Well, sir, that's just it. I can't. I know it sounds funny like, but there it is! I can't read or write—only me name, an' I only learned to do that when I went into business."

The manager was so surprised that he jumped up from his chair.



"That's the most extraordinary thing I ever heard."

"You see, it's like this, sir—I never 'ad the opportunity until it was too late, and then some'ow I wouldn't. I got obstinate like."

The manager stared at him as though he were a prehistoric monster.

"And do you mean to say that

you've built up this important business and amassed a fortune of thirty thousand pounds without being able to read or write? Good God, man, what would you be now if you had been able to?"

"I can tell you that, sir," said Mr. Foreman, a little smile on his still aristocratic features. "I'd be verger of St. Peter's, Neville Square."

Discussion

1. What indications are there that Albert Edward is a better verger than the new vicar is a vicar?
2. The plot of this story hinges on three decisions. On what basis is each decision reached?
3. Point out passages in which Maugham prepares the reader for the verger's success in some new endeavor.
4. How does Albert Edward's language differ when he talks to himself and when he talks to others? What purpose does this device serve?
5. On first thought this story may seem to question the value of education. What does it really question?

Research

1. Maugham has a great many fine short stories to his credit. Among the collections of his stories are *The Cosmopolitans*, from which "The Verger" is taken, *East and West*, *Ah King*, and *The Mixture as Before*.
2. One of the great novels of modern times is Maugham's *Of Human Bondage*. If you like mature books, you will find this one both satisfying and thought-provoking.
3. If you are interested in writing, you might try a short story of your own based on Maugham's plot. Change the setting and circumstances, but keep the main character a capable individual who loses his job because of some apparent deficiency in his education.

ERIC KNIGHT was born in Menston, Yorkshire, the third son of Quaker parents. His father, who was a diamond merchant, died in South Africa two years after Eric's birth. To support her sons Mrs. Knight went to Russia to become governess to Princess Xenia's children. The three boys lived with relatives in England and took turns visiting their mother in Russia until she returned to England in 1905.

Self-supporting from the age of thirteen, Knight came to the United States with his mother and brothers when he was fifteen. Several years of formal education followed. When World War I broke out, Knight enlisted in the Canadian Light Infantry. After the war he returned to the United States and became drama critic for the *Philadelphia Ledger*. His first short story to be published was "The Two-fifty Hat," which he sold to *Liberty* magazine in 1935. The following year one of his stories won an O. Henry Memorial Award and was included in a volume of the best stories of the year. This success prompted Knight to leave newspaper work for fiction.

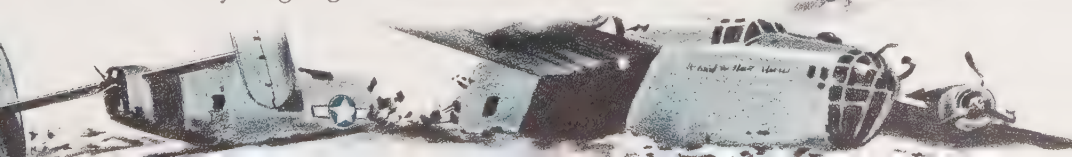
In 1938 Knight returned to his native Yorkshire. When the United States entered World War II, though still a British citizen, he joined the United States Army, where he attained the rank of major in the Special Services Division. He died in an airplane crash en route to North Africa on an official army mission.

Knight greatly admired Charles Dickens, and, like the popular Victorian novelist, he loved common people and had a keen ear for their speech. He once told an interviewer that when he was writing dialogue he would walk around the room trying out his speeches aloud. Not until a remark sounded right would he write it down.

In *The Flying Yorkshireman*, published in 1937, Knight good-humoredly satirized his fellow Englishmen. His story for children, *Lassie Come Home*, published in 1940, has become a classic among dog stories and was made into a popular motion picture. *Sam Small Flies Again*, published in 1942, is a collection of ten short stories. "All Yankees Are Liars" is one of them. In "All Yankees Are Liars" Knight depicts his beloved Yorkshiremen drinking ale and playing darts in a village inn. The whole scene might well have come from the pen of Charles Dickens, had he lived so long. The Yorkshire dialect Knight recorded with loving care, for to his deep regret he found that radio and motion pictures were making standard English seem more attractive to the younger generation of Yorkshiremen.

ERIC KNIGHT

1897-1943



All Yankees Are Liars

*You can always tell the Irish,
You can always tell the Dutch.
You can always tell a Yankee;
But you cannot tell him much.*

Mr. Smith was pleased with The Spread Eagle. He was pleased with Polkingthorpe Brig. The village was off the beaten track—the truly rural sort of English village the American always wants to see.

The inn was low and rambling, with great sloping roofs. Over the door swung the sign—a darksome bird in a weather-beaten setting.

Everything justified his decision to take this bicycle trip up into the north—the mullioned windows, the roaring fire, the Yorkshire accents of the men who shuffled over the sanded stone floor of the low-ceilinged room as they played darts. Mr. Smith was almost beginning to understand what they were talking about. During his excellent high tea he had sorted out the four men playing darts. One was Saw Cooper, a farmer; a small old man was referred to as Sam; a young, bright-faced lad who played darts left-handed was Gollicker Pearson; and the fourth, a huge man, was just called Ian.



Mr. Smith watched them play, listening to the endless thwock of the darts in the cork board as he finished his meal. The barmaid, plump, corn-haired, came toward him, her apron rustling stiffly.

"Would there be owt else?"

"No. It was a very good meal." Mr. Smith smiled. He wanted to make the girl talk some more. "Er—what do they do for fun in this place of an evening?"

"Foon?" she repeated. "Well, they sit here—or o' Sat'day neights lots o' fowk goa ovver to Wuxley to t' pictures." She waited. "They gate Boock D'Arcy i' T' Singing Cowboy," she added suggestively.

"All Yankees Are Liars" from *Sam Small Flies Again*, by Eric Knight, is reprinted by permission of the Author's Estate. Copyright © 1938 by The Curtis Publishing Co.



Mr. Smith had already become acquainted with British cinemas in small towns. Also, he was a Southern Californian, and had that familiarity with movies that belongs to all Southern Californians. He had no inclination to go four miles to see a last year's Class B Western. "No. I think I'll have another ale and sit here," he said.

"If tha'll sit ovver by t' fire, Ah'll bring it to thee theer. Then Ah can clean oop here."

Mr. Smith sat on the bench by the generous fire and nursed his ale. The dart game came to an end with Saw Cooper losing and paying for the round. The men brought their mugs to the fire. Mr. Smith shifted politely. The men, in the presence

of a stranger, grew quiet. Mr. Smith decided to put them at ease.

"Pretty chilly for an October evening, isn't it?"

The men considered the remark, as if looking at both sides of it. Finally Saw Cooper spoke.

"Aye," he said.

The others nodded. There was silence, and the five regarded the fire. Then, suddenly, young Gollicker smiled.

"Tha shouldn't heed t' cowl, be- ing a Yankee," he said.

"Ah, but I'm not a Yankee," Mr. Smith said.

They stared at him in disbelief.

"Yankees," explained Mr. Smith, "come from New England."

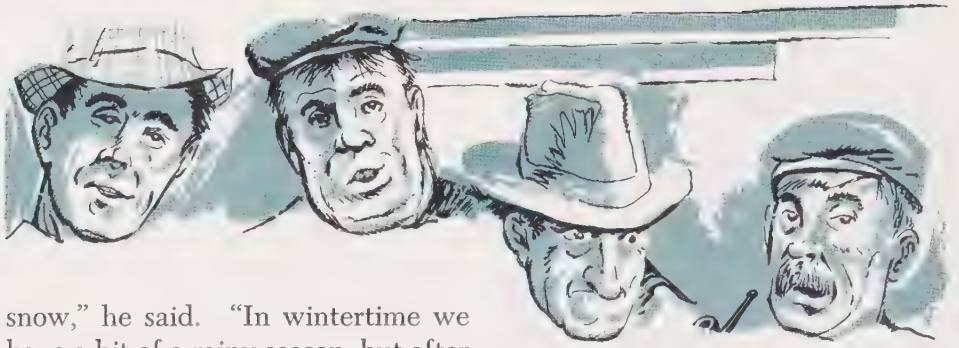
They looked from Mr. Smith to one another. The big man named Ian took a deep breath.

"Yankees," he said, "coom fro' t' United States."

"Well, yes. New England is a part of the United States," Mr. Smith said. "But it's thousands of miles away from where I live. In fact, believe it or not, I should think you're closer to the Yankees than I am. You see, the United States is a big country. In the part where the Yankees come from, it gets very cold in the winter. Where I am—in Southern California—it never snows. Why, I've never known it to snow there in all my life."

"No snow?" Gollicker breathed.

Mr. Smith smiled. For, after all, he was a Southern Californian—and they were discussing climate. "No



snow," he said. "In wintertime we have a bit of a rainy season, but after February it clears, and then it doesn't even rain for nine months—not a drop."

"Noa rain for a nine month—noan at all?" Saw Cooper asked.

"Not a drop. Day after day, the sun comes out, clear skies, never a drop of rain for nine months. Never!"

"Whet do ye grow theer, lad?" Saw asked slyly.

"Lots of things. Truck, vegetables, oranges—all kinds of things."

There was a silence again. Big Ian took a breath.

"Orinjis," he said, and then took another breath, "graw i' Spain."

He looked at Mr. Smith so emphatically that Mr. Smith nodded.

"Oh, yes," he said. "They grow in Spain, too, I understand."

"Orinjis," Ian repeated, "graw i' Spain."

That seemed to settle the question. They all looked in the fire in silence. Saw Cooper sniffed.

"Whet else grows theer?"

"Well, I have a ranch there; we grow alfalfa."

"Whet's that off to be?"

"Alfalfa? We use it for hay. It's a desert plant originally, but it

thrives in California. We get eight cuttings a year."

"Eight cuttings o' hay a year?"

"Eight cuttings a year."

The little man, Sam, spoke for the first time: "Mister, if it doan't rain for a nine month, how can ye get eight cuttings o' hay a year?"

"Oh, that's easy," Mr. Smith said. "We irrigate the land." He went into a short but conclusive description of irrigating.

"Heh," Saw Cooper said. "Wheer's this here watter coom fro?"

"In the San Fernando Valley we buy it from the water company, just like you do in your homes."

"Wheer do they get it?"

"From reservoirs."

"If it doan't rain, where's t' reservoirs get t' watter?"

"Oh, we pipe it down from five hundred miles north. It rains a lot up there."

"And ye sprinkle t' farming land out o' t' watter tap. How many acres hesta?"

"It isn't like sprinkling from the tap, of course. I used that to illustrate. The pipes are large—we have fourteen-inch valves on our

pipes. We flood the land—cover it right over with water.”

Saw looked in the fire. “Does corn grow theer?”

“Well, generally our land is too valuable to put into corn. But it will grow corn fourteen feet high.”¹

They made noises in their throats and shifted their feet.

“Fohteen foot,” Saw breathed. “Eigh, ba gum!”

“Mister,” Sam said, “once Ah were oop to see t’ Firth o’ Forth brig.² Ah suppose they hev bigger brigs i’ Yankeeland?”

Mr. Smith should have touched on the new Oakland bridge, but then, he was a *Southern Californian*.

“We have bridges, but they’re building vehicular tunnels under the rivers now.”

“Whet for?”

“Well, there’s so much motor traffic.”

“How mony moatorcars goa through ’em?”

Mr. Smith lit his pipe happily. They seemed quite interested in America.

“I couldn’t say. The way they turn ’em out, I should say there’s hundreds of thousands.”

“How fast do they turn ’em out?” Gollicker asked.



“I don’t know. I think they roll out finished at the rate of one every couple of minutes.”

“And they goa i’ tunnels, not i’ brigs?” Sam commented.

“Oh, we have some bridges.”

“Big uns, Ah suppose.”

“Well,” Mr. Smith said modestly, thinking of the Pulaski Skyway coming into New York, “we have some that go right over entire towns. You’re practically on one bridge for miles.”

Saw Cooper spat in the fire. “How mony fowk is there in all America?”

Mr. Smith didn’t know, but he felt expansive. And after all, there was South America, too.

“A quarter of a billion, I should say,” he hazarded.

“A quarter of a billion,” they repeated. Then they stared at Mr. Smith, and he became aware of their disbelief.

“Wait a moment,” he said. “I think a billion is different in America from here. It’s a thousand million in America and a million million here, isn’t it?”

“A billion,” said Ian slowly, “is a billion.”

¹corn fourteen feet high. In England corn means small grain such as wheat and oats. What Americans call corn the English call maize.

²Firth o’ Forth brig. This mile-long bridge across the Forth River, completed in 1889, is one of the notable bridges of the world.

The others nodded, and then Ian stood. The others rose, too.

"Oh—er—wait a minute. Won't you all have a drink with me?" Mr. Smith invited.

"Us is off to play darts for a round—us four," Ian said meaningly.

The other three laughed.

"Ah knew them their brigs o' thine'd hev to be big," Saw Cooper said as a parting shot as he swung over the bench. "That's so's they'd be able to goa ovver wheat what graws fohteen foot high when ye sprinkle it fro' t' watter tap."

He grinned at the others in victory.

"I didn't say wheat; I said corn," Mr. Smith protested.

"Same thing," Saw snapped.

"It isn't. Wheat grows in an ear. Corn grows on a cob; it has broad long leaves."

"Heh! That's maize," Saw said.

Big Ian stepped between Saw Cooper and Mr. Smith.

"Now, lad," he said flatly, "tha said corn, and Ah heeard thee. Thee and thy orinjis, and farming out o' t' watter tap, and brigs ovver cities, and it nivver rains, and deny-ing th' art a Yankee, and a billion is a billion and yet it ain't. Tha's tripped thysen oop a dozen times, it seems to me. Now, hesta owt to say?"

Mr. Smith looked at Big Ian, standing belligerently with legs widespread and his thumbs in the waistband of his corduroy trousers. He looked round and saw everyone in the inn waiting, silent.

Then a curious thing happened. In that minute the smell of soft-coal smoke and pig-twist tobacco and ale was gone, and instead Mr. Smith was smelling the mixed odor of sun-baked land and citrus blossom and jasmine and eucalyptus trees, just as you smell it in the cool darkness coming across the San Fernando Valley. And he was homesick. Suddenly it felt unreal that he should be so far from home, sitting in an English inn with these men about him. He looked up at the faces, forbidding in their expression of disapproval. And he began to laugh.

It was all so unreal that he laughed until he cried. Every time he looked up he saw the faces, now even more comical in their bewilderment than they had been in their disapproval. They stared at him, and then Big Ian began to laugh.

"Eigh, Ah'll be jiggered!" he roared. "Drat ma buttons if Ah won't!"

It was Mr. Smith's turn to be puzzled now.

Big Ian roared, and suddenly slapped Mr. Smith on the back so heartily that his chin flew up in the air and then banged back on his chest. The others looked on in amazement.

"Why, whet's oop, Ian?" Saw asked.

"Why, ye gowks!" Ian roared. "He's laughing at ye! He's been heving us on! Sitting theer for an hour, keeping his mug straight and

telling us the tale! And us swallering it, thinking he was serious!"

"But," Mr. Smith said—"but you don't—"

"Nay, now no moar on it!" Ian roared. "Ye've coddled us for fair, and done it champion! Lewk at owd Sam's face!"

The others regarded Ian and scratched their heads and grinned sheepishly, and finally looked at Mr. Smith in admiration.

"But—" Mr. Smith began again.

"Nay, now, ye copped us nappin," Ian said, "and here's ma hand on it. Soa we'll hev noa moar—onless ye'd like to tell us whet Yankeeland's rightly like."

Mr. Smith drew a deep breath. "Well, what would you like to hear about?"

"About cowboys," young Gollicker breathed. "Werta ivver a cowboy?"

For a moment Mr. Smith stood on a brink, and then an imp pushed him over.

"Of course I've been a cowboy—naturally," Mr. Smith said. "What would you like to hear about it?"

"Wait a minute," Gollicker said. They all adjusted themselves on the bench. "Now," he went on, "tell us about a roundup—tha knows, 'Ah'm yeading for t' last roundup,' like they sings."

Mr. Smith held his mental breath and plunged.

"Ah," he said. "A roundup and the life of a cowboy. Up at the crack of dawn, mates, and down to the corral. There you rope your horse—"

"A mustang?" Gollicker asked.

"A mustang," Mr. Smith agreed.

"A wild one off'n the prairies, happen?"

"Indeed a wild one from off the prairies," Mr. Smith agreed. "I see you know America yourself."

Gollicker grinned modestly. "Doan't let me interrupt, measter," he apologized.

Mr. Smith drew another breath. He saw he was up against at least one expert, so he made it very good. Inwardly he thanked fate for what he had hitherto regarded as two entirely misspent weeks on a Nevada dude ranch. He gave them, in more senses than one, a moving picture of the cowboy's life.

When he was done, Gollicker sighed and Big Ian nodded.

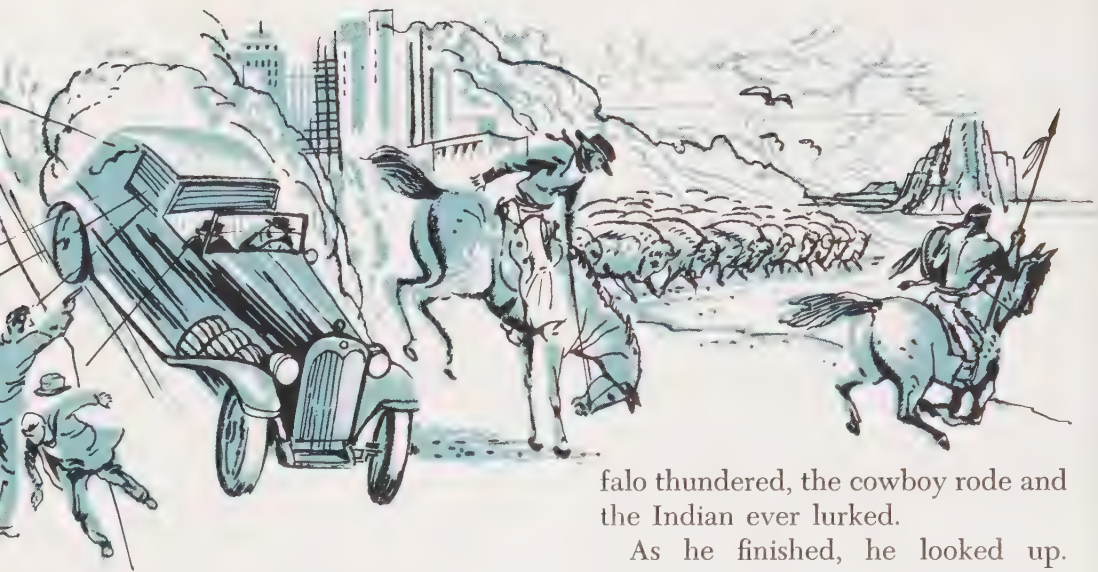
"Now," Sam said, "how about them bloody buffalo?"

"Ah, the buffalo," Mr. Smith said. "The thundering herd! The bison! For a while there was danger—or thought to be—that the herds were dying out. But now, I am glad to say—and no doubt you are just as glad to hear—the herds are increasing, and ere long, again the crack of a rifle will bring down a bull in full gallop."

"But how about them bloody Indians?" Saw put in.

Mr. Smith considered the Indians at the station in Santa Fe. They didn't seem at all satisfactory. But he was inspired. He drew himself up.

"You will pardon me if I do not



speak of that," he said. "We have not too much love for the paleface who stole our lands. I say 'we,' for my mother was Yellow Blanket, a princess of the Blackfoot tribe. Therefore, let us not speak of the white man and the red man."

He stared into the fire—majestically, he hoped.

"Now, see what tha's done?" Ian said to Saw. "Happen it'll learn thee to keep thy yapper shut once in a while. . . . Tha maun excuse him, measter. Tell us about gangsters instead. Didta ivver run into any gangsters?"

"Run into them? Why, how could you help it?" Mr. Smith asked.

Swiftly and graphically he painted for them an America in which here was the town where the bullets of the gangs cracked day and night. Here was the last street, and on it the last house, and beyond that was the trackless prairie where the buf-

falo thundered, the cowboy rode and the Indian ever lurked.

As he finished, he looked up. Everyone in the inn was listening. Men had gathered behind him silently. At the bar, the maid leaned on her elbows, entranced.

"Ah, I talk too much," Mr. Smith said.

"Nay, goa on, lad," they said. "Goa on."

"Well, it's dry work. How about a drink?"

"Champion," said Saw.

"Owd on," Big Ian said. "Us'll play darts for a round."

"Now, Ian, if the lad wants to buy —"

"Ah said," Ian repeated, "us'll play darts—onybody that wishes to be in on t' round. And t'loser will pay."

Mr. Smith paid anyhow, for the dart game was trickier than he had thought, and they all seemed to be experts.

He was getting very much better when the barmaid called: "Time, gentlemen, please."

Mr. Smith was sorry. It had been

a good evening. They all said good night cheerfully. Big Ian shook him by the hand.

"Well, soa long, lad. We had a champion time. But Ah just want to say, tha didn't fool me when tha were kidding us at first. Tha sees, for one thing, us goas to t' pictures and so us knaws whet America's

really like. And then Ah'd allus heeard tell that all Yankees were liars."

"Yes," Mr. Smith said, regarding his conscience, "I did tell some lies."

"Aye, but Ah suppose it's a way ye Yankees hev," Ian said. "But it's all right as long as tha told us t' trewth finally."

Discussion

1. What is Mr. Smith's reason for feeling pleased at the beginning of the story? Why does he feel pleased at the end of the story?
2. Which of Smith's remarks first antagonizes the Englishmen?
3. Why did Smith's description of life in Southern California seem so improbable to the Englishmen? Why did they believe his lies?
4. Explain how Smith's remark, "I did tell some lies," satisfied both his audience and himself.
5. What evidence do you find in this story that Knight understood both Englishmen and Americans?

Research

1. If you enjoyed this story, you will find more like it in *Sam Small Flies Again*. If time permits, perhaps you could select a particularly amusing story to read aloud. Be sure to practice the Yorkshire dialect before attempting it in class.
2. Perhaps someone in your community has lived in England and would be willing to talk to the class about his experiences. Ask him to mention misunderstandings he recalls that grew out of apparently common words having different meanings for Englishmen and Americans.
3. You might have an interesting discussion on motion pictures. What pictures have you seen that would be certain to give other nations a wrong impression of the United States? Can you think of any that represent the United States truthfully? Should the United States restrict the export of motion pictures?



BIOGRAPHY



It was Samuel Johnson, himself the subject of the greatest biography in English literature, who said, "There has rarely passed a life of which a judicious and faithful narrative would not be useful." Judicious or not, useful or not, biographical writing in England has increased in almost geometric proportion from century to century.

The word *biography*, a combination of the Greek words for *life* and *writing*, dates back to classic Greece, and biographical writings appeared in both Greece and Rome. In England biographical writings appeared as early as Bede, but the word *biography* was apparently first used in 1683, when Dryden used it to describe Plutarch's *Lives*.

In early times biography was incidental to historical and philosophical writing. A man's life was told not as a work of art in itself but merely because it made a historical point, or was suitable for illustrating a theory, or served to emphasize a particular moral quality. This indirect approach to biography was early exemplified by Plutarch, who wrote his famous *Parallel Lives* of forty-six Greeks and Romans toward the end of the first century. To make his points about morality Plutarch depended heavily upon pertinent anecdotes. When the Venerable Bede wrote his *Ecclesiastical History* in eighth-century Britain, he was using the pattern Plutarch had established. This literary treatment of individual men's lives for purely illustrative purposes persisted into relatively modern times.

The concept of biography as "a portrait of a soul in its adventures through life" appeared only accidentally, or

incidentally, before the seventeenth century. Two of these exceptions appeared in English literature early in the Elizabethan age. They are William Roper's life of his father-in-law, Sir Thomas More, and George Cavendish's life of Cardinal Wolsey. Neither manuscript, however, was published until the seventeenth century.

The title of deliberate pioneer in biography probably belongs to Izaak Walton, who published a *Life of Donne* in 1640 and followed it with four others, later published together as *Walton's Lives*. These lives are to a considerable extent the forerunners of later English biographies.

Two important diaries kept during the seventeenth century might have had a favorable influence on biographical writing had they been known, but neither found its way into print until the nineteenth century. Samuel Pepys' diary, covering the period from 1660 to 1669, was published in 1825. John Evelyn's diary, covering the years 1620-1706, was published in 1818. Both Pepys and Evelyn were keen and discriminating observers, and their diaries are filled with pertinent details of their own lives and of the lives of people with whom they came in contact.

The first English autobiography is generally attributed to Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury (1583-1648). His manuscript, however, remained unpublished until 1764. The first autobiography of a woman, that of Anne Harrison, Lady Fanshawe (1625-1680), remained in manuscript even longer, not being published until 1829.

While these diaries and autobiographies remained largely unknown, and could not, therefore, contribute to the advance of literature, the biography as

a type received a serious setback from Thomas Sprat, who in 1668 published his *Life of Cowley*. Sprat apparently thought of biography in terms of a funeral oration and therefore omitted the picturesque details and revealing anecdotes that are essential if the subject of a biography is to seem a real person, as Walton and others had discovered. Sprat's goal, worthy enough in itself but not conducive to good biographical writing, was to provide his readers with moral inspiration. The popularity of Sprat's work unfortunately led many to imitate him.

Although Samuel Johnson is best known today as the subject of a biography, it must not be forgotten that he was himself a biographer. His *Lives of the Poets* appeared in ten volumes from 1779 to 1781. The *Lives* introduced a new element into literary biography in that they were critical as well as biographical. To data on the poet's life Johnson added an analysis of his work. In the field of the arts this type, generally referred to as a "critical" biography, still persists, sometimes in essay length, sometimes in book length.

Meanwhile a return to what is today thought of as true biography appeared in 1774 in the *Life and Letters of Gray*, written by the poet's friend William Mason. Although Mason took considerable liberty in editing his friend's correspondence, he did make a notable contribution to biography with the then novel idea of using a man's own words to reveal his character.

James Boswell was familiar with Mason's volume and adapted Mason's technique to his own great work, the *Life of Dr. Samuel Johnson*, published in 1791. With the appearance of Boswell's volume on Johnson, the full pat-

tern for biographical writing was available for the use of anyone. Although it is generally conceded that Boswell has never been surpassed, his technique has been used in varying degrees by all later writers of biography.

The nineteenth century saw a greater increase in quantity than in quality of biographical writing. Indeed, toward the close of the century biography flourished to such excess that no man who had filled even a passing place in the eyes of the public could rest long in his grave before someone issued a *Life-and-Letters*, usually in several volumes. A notable exception in favor of quality was John Lockhart's *Life of Sir Walter Scott*, published in 1837. Many critics rank this work second only to that of Boswell. Although Lockhart was writing about his father-in-law, the biography is clearly objective.

The outstanding autobiography of the nineteenth century was that of Anthony Trollope, published in 1883. Although not popular in its own day, it is now ranked among the great autobiographies of English literature, taking its place with the autobiography of the American Benjamin Franklin in its complete honesty, its sincere modesty, and in its simple style. Both these books are of the "success" or "Cinderella" type, which apparently never loses its popularity on either side of the Atlantic.

Early in the twentieth century came a new development in biography—borrowed from the novel—an attempt to *interpret* character, to explore the reasons behind the stated reasons. In England, Lytton Strachey was the pioneer in the new approach. Strachey courageously sought to create lifelike portraits by selecting pertinent illustrations from the known words and actions

of his subjects and by reconstructing their psychological processes. Strachey's collection of brief biographies, *Eminent Victorians*, appeared in 1918. It was followed by his famous *Queen Victoria* in 1921 and *Elizabeth and Essex* in 1928. The influence of these books on modern biography has not been altogether for the good. While the result has generally been livelier reading, many imitators of Strachey have lacked his discrimination and have yielded to the temptation to base their psychological conclusions on insufficient or flimsy evidence. Some writers, it must be said, honestly admit this weakness and call their works fictional-biographies. *Wife to Mr. Milton*, by Robert Graves, is an example of this type. The best of Strachey's numerous followers are probably Sir Harold Nicholson and Philip Guedalla. Nicholson wrote biographies of Byron, Tennyson, and Swinburne, while Guedalla's chief biographies were of Wellington and Palmerston.

The twentieth century has seen a continued interest in biography, but it has been perhaps even more the century of autobiography. Prominent people no longer wait for old age to review their lives. Winston Churchill, for example, published *Roving Commission: My Early Life* in 1930, when he was fifty-six, and Noel Coward published his *Present Indicative* in 1937, when he was thirty-eight.

Two excellent but otherwise different autobiographies deserve special mention. T. E. Lawrence's *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* was published in 1926. It is a narrative of Lawrence's successful efforts to unite the Arab tribes against the Turks in World War I. It is more than a war book, however, in that it is a

revelation of a complex and interesting personality. The book has assumed new interest now that Arab nationalism is creating unrest in the Middle East. The other distinguished autobiography is Sir Osbert Sitwell's five-volume recreation of upper-class life in England during the past fifty years of social upheaval. Sir Osbert has the gift of almost total recall and also is a talented writer.

In biography the leading English writer today is Mrs. Cecil Woodham-Smith. Her *Florence Nightingale*, published in 1950, follows the Strachey pattern, but Mrs. Woodham-Smith is more restrained in her psychological guesses. Her book is both reliable and readable. *The Reason Why*, published in 1953, is a combined biography of the three almost incredible characters who shared responsibility for the useless charge of the Light Brigade, the military blunder glorified by Tennyson, much to his later embarrassment.

The continued and continuous appeal of biography is evidenced not only by the flow of books which in varying degrees seek to reveal "person to person," but in the overwhelming quantity of biographical writing in magazines. The periodicals are few indeed that do not feature someone's life in every issue. While much of this writing is shallow, notable brief biographies appear in the *New Yorker* "Profiles" and in *Time's* "cover" stories.

We need no longer agree fully with Carlyle's statement that, "A well-written life is almost as rare as a well-spent one." The important thing is to develop discrimination, and that one does by reading the best and searching out the qualities that make it a work of literary merit.

BEDE, or the "Venerable Bede," as he came to be known, was born near the monasteries of Wearmouth and Jarrow, in the north of England. At the age of seven he was sent to Jarrow to be educated by the Abbot Benedict, who was director of both monasteries. Bede remained in the monastery the rest of his life. He became a deacon at the early age of nineteen and a priest at thirty. Of his life in the monastery he wrote, "I wholly applied myself to the study of Scripture, and amidst the observance of regular discipline, and the daily charge of singing in the church, I always took delight in learning, teaching, and writing." Through his studies in the monastery library he became perhaps the most learned man in Western Europe in his day. It was Bede who began the custom of dating letters and who popularized our present mode of counting time from the birth of Christ.

Bede spent many years writing his *Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation*, completing his work in 731. Written in Latin, the *History* was translated into Anglo-Saxon about a hundred and fifty years later either by Alfred the Great himself or under his direction. The *History* covers the period from 55 B.C. to 731 A.D. It is an important historical and literary document, providing us with biographical sketches of many persons who would otherwise have remained mere names. One of the most interesting biographies in the *History* is that of the poet Caedmon. Among Bede's more strictly biographical works are a life of St. Cuthbert and a *History of the Abbots* (of Wearmouth and Jarrow). Bede's last work was the translation into Anglo-Saxon of the Gospel of St. John. In all of his writings the style is clear, simple, and sincere.

The story of Caedmon is from Book IV, Chapter 24 of the *Ecclesiastical History*. Caedmon is the first English poet whose name has survived. We do not know when Caedmon was born, nor for certain when he died. Nor can we date his dream beyond knowing that it occurred between 658 and 680, the period when Hilda was abbess at Whitby. According to legend Caedmon died in 680, the same year as the death of Hilda. In Caedmon's day the word *song* was used in the same sense in which we now use the word *poem*.



Bede's Ecclesiastical History

Caedmon



In this Abbess's Minster¹ was a certain brother extraordinarily magnified and honored with a divine gift; for he was wont to make fitting songs which conduced to religion and piety; so that whatever he learned through clerks of the holy writings, that he, after a little space, would usually adorn with the greatest sweetness and feeling, and bring forth in the English tongue; and by his songs the minds of many men were often inflamed with contempt for the world, and with desire of heavenly life. And moreover, many others after him, in the English nation, sought to make pious songs; but yet none could do like him, for he

had not been taught from men, nor through man, to learn the poetic art; but he was divinely aided, and through God's grace received the art of song. And he therefore never might make aught of falsehood or of idle poems, but just those only which conduced to religion, and which it became his pious tongue to sing. The man was placed in worldly life until the time that he was of mature age, and had never learned any poem; and he therefore often in convivial society, when, for the sake of mirth, it was resolved that they all in turn should sing to the harp, when he saw the harp approaching him, then for shame he would rise from the assembly and go home to his house.

When he so on a certain time did,

¹Minster. A monastery. Originally the term meant merely a residence of a community living under religious vows.

that he left the house of the convivial meeting, and was gone out to the stall of the cattle, the care of which that night had been committed to him—when he there, at proper time, placed his limbs on the bed and slept, then stood some man by him, in a dream, and hailed and greeted him, and named him by his name, saying “Caedmon, sing me something.” Then he answered and said, “I cannot sing anything, and therefore I went out from this convivial meeting, and retired hither, because I could not.” Again he who was speaking with him said, “Yet thou must sing to me.” Said he, “What shall I sing?” Said he, “Sing me the beginning of things.” When he received this answer, then he began forthwith to sing, in praise of God the Creator, the verses and the words which he had never heard, the order of which is this:

~~~~~  
 Now must we praise  
 the Guardian of heaven's kingdom,  
 the Creator's might,  
 and his mind's thought;  
 glorious Father of men!  
 as of every wonder he,  
 Lord eternal,  
 formed the beginning.~~~~~  
 ~~~~~  
 He first framed
 for the children of earth
 the heaven as a roof;
 holy Creator!
 then mid-earth,
 the Guardian of mankind,
 the eternal Lord,
 afterwards produced;
 the earth for men,
 Lord Almighty!~~~~~

Then he arose from sleep, and had fast in mind all that he sleeping had sung, and to those words forthwith joined many words of song worthy of God in the same measure.

Then came he in the morning to the town-reeve,² who was his superior, and said to him what gift he had received; and he forthwith led him to the abbess, and told, and made that known to her. Then she bade all the most learned men and the learners to assemble, and in their presence bade him tell the dream, and sing the poem; that, by the judgment of them all, it might be determined why or whence that was come. Then it seemed to them all, so as it was, that to him, from the Lord himself, a heavenly gift had been given. Then they expounded to him and said some holy history, and words of godly lore; then bade him, if he could, to sing some of them, and turn them into the melody of song. When he had undertaken the thing, then went he home to his house, and came again in the morning, and sang and gave to them, adorned with the best poetry, what had been entrusted to him.

Then began the abbess to make much of and love the grace of God in the man; and she then exhorted and instructed him to forsake worldly life and take to monkhood; and he that well approved. And she received him into the minster

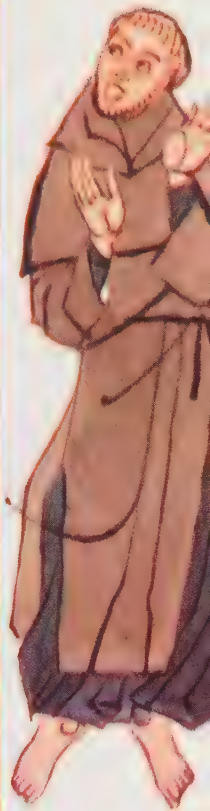
²town-reeve. The chief or highest official of a town.



with his goods, and associated him with the congregation of those servants of God, and caused him to be taught the series of the Holy History and Gospel; and he, all that he could learn by hearing, meditated with himself, and, as a clean animal, ruminating, turned into the sweetest verse; and his song and his verse were so winsome to hear, that his teachers themselves wrote and learned from his mouth. He first sang of earth's creation, and of the origin of mankind, and all the history of Genesis, which is the first book of Moses, and then of the departure of the people of Israel from the Egyptians' land, and of the entrance of the land of promise, and of many other histories of the canonical books of Holy Writ; and of Christ's incarnation, and of his passion, and of his ascension into heaven; and of the coming of the Holy Ghost, and the doctrine of the Apostles. And also of the terror of the doom to come, and the fear of

hell torment, and the sweetness of the heavenly kingdom, he made many poems; and, in like manner, many others of the divine benefits and judgments he made; in all which he earnestly took care to draw men from the love of sins and wicked deeds, and to excite to a love and desire of good deeds; for he was a very pious man, and to regular disciplines humbly subjected; and against those who in otherwise would act, he was inflamed with the heat of great zeal. And he therefore with a fair end his life closed and ended.

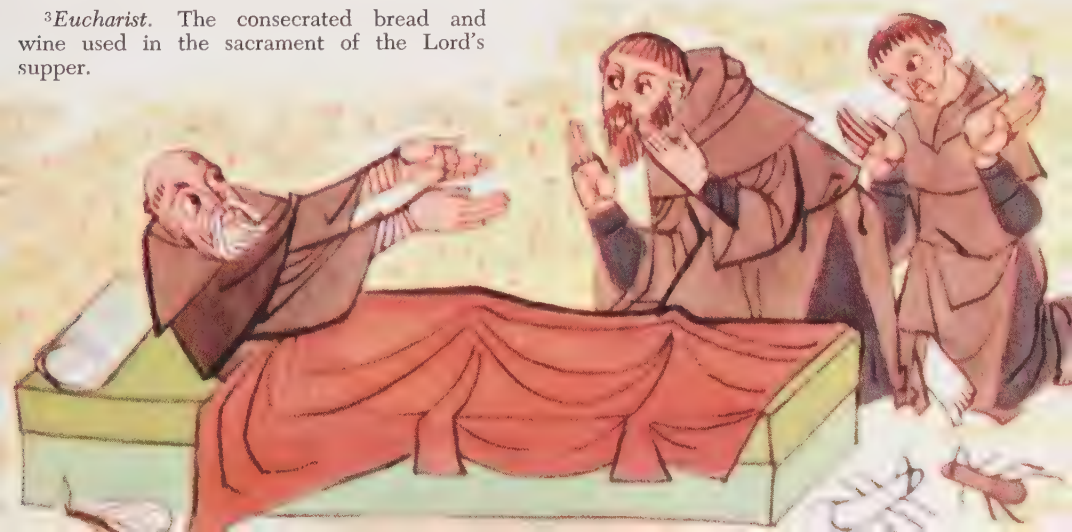
For when the time approached of his decease and departure, then was he for fourteen days ere that oppressed and troubled with bodily infirmity; yet so moderately that, during all that time, he could both speak and walk. There was in the neighborhood a house for infirm men, in which it was their custom to bring the infirm, and those who were on the point of departure, and there at-



tend to them together. Then bade he his servant, on the eve of the night that he was going from the world, to prepare him a place in that house, that he might rest; where-upon the servant wondered why he this bade, for it seemed to him that his departure was not so near; yet he did as he said and commanded. And when he there went to bed, and in joyful mood was speaking some things, and joking together with those who were therein previously, then it was over midnight that he asked, whether they had the Eucha-

rist³ within. They answered, "What need is to thee of the Eucharist? Thy departure is not so near, now thou thus cheerfully and thus gladly art speaking to us." Again he said, "Bring me nevertheless the Eucharist."

³*Eucharist.* The consecrated bread and wine used in the sacrament of the Lord's supper.



When he had it in his hands, he asked, Whether they had all a placid mind and kind, and without any ill-will toward him. Then they all answered, and said, that they knew of no ill-will toward him, but they all were very kindly disposed and they besought him in turn that he would be kindly disposed to them all. Then he answered and said, “My beloved brethren, I am very kindly disposed to you and all God’s men.” And he thus was strengthening himself with the heavenly viaticum,⁴ and preparing himself an entrance into another life. Again he asked, How near it was to the hour that the brethren must rise and teach the people of God, and sing their nocturns.⁵ They answered, “It is not far to that.” He said, “It is well; let us await the hour.” And then he prayed, and

signed himself with Christ’s cross, and reclined his head on the bolster, and slept for a little space; and so with stillness ended his life. And thus it was, that as he with pure and calm mind and tranquil devotion had served God, that he, in like manner, left the world with as calm a death, and went to His presence; and the tongue that had composed so many holy words in the Creator’s praise, he then in like manner its last words closed in His praise, crossing himself, and committing his soul into His hands. Thus it is seen that he was conscious of his own departure, from what we have now heard say.

⁴*viaticum*. The Eucharist when given to someone who is dying.

⁵*nocturns*. A part of the night service, usually sung just before daybreak.

Discussion

1. What do you think was Bede’s purpose in writing the story of Caedmon? Why did he give so few biographical details?
2. We cannot, of course, know whether Caedmon’s dream was real or merely symbolical. In either case what was its significance?
3. Why are we told nothing of Caedmon’s birth and early life? Why is considerable space devoted to his death?
4. What does this selection tell us about the origins of English poetry?
5. What characteristics of modern biography were already present in this early example?

Research

An interesting report might be made of the coming of Christianity to the British Isles. Be sure to include the work of St. Patrick.

SAMUEL PEPYS 1633–1703

SAMUEL PEPYS' father was for a time a tailor in London, but later he inherited a small estate at Brampton, where he lived the rest of his life. It is not known where Samuel, fifth of the Pepys' eleven children, was born. He was sent to St. Paul's school in London, and it was while he was a student there that he witnessed the execution of Charles I. At Cambridge University, where he won several scholarships, he earned in succession B.A. and M.A. degrees.

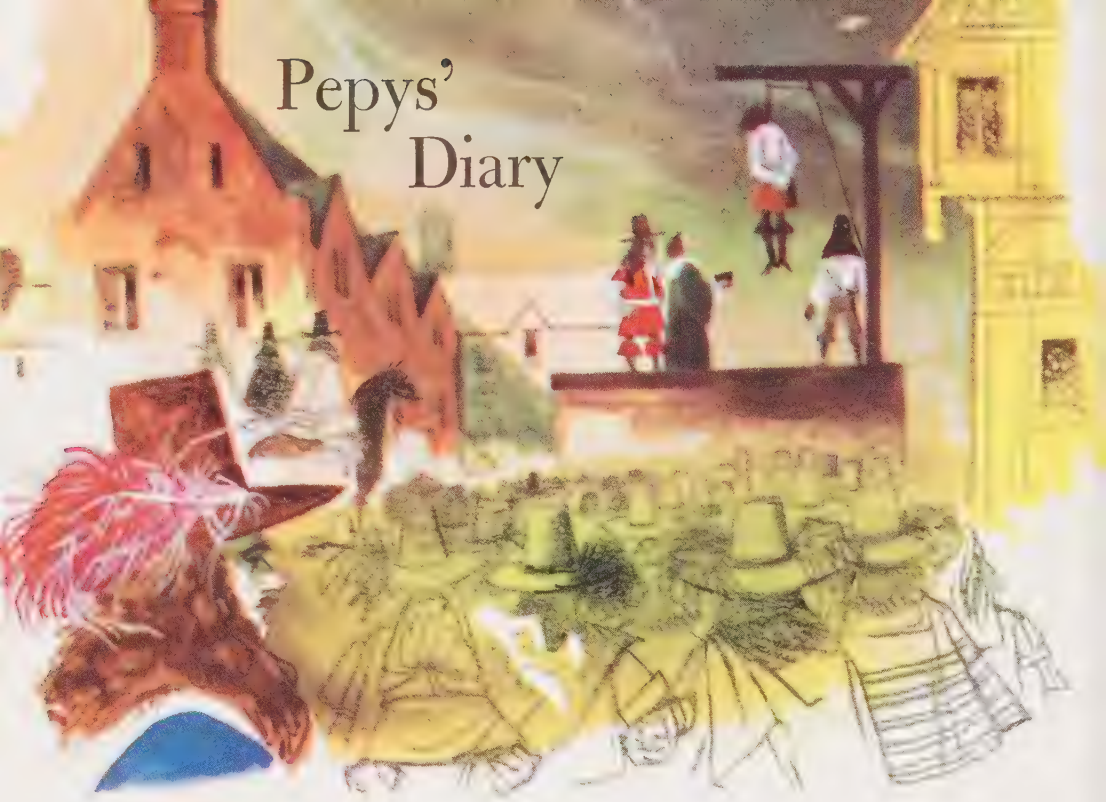
In 1655 Pepys married Elizabeth St. Michel, and the following year he entered the service of a cousin, Sir Edward Montagu, who was an admiral. In 1660 Pepys became his cousin's secretary and accompanied him on the ship which brought Charles II back from exile. Pepys became a loyal public servant, and during the Great Plague of 1665, when most government officials fled to the country, he worked tirelessly in London. In 1672 Pepys was made Secretary of the Admiralty, a position in which he did much to build up the efficiency of the British navy. Accused of selling naval secrets to the French, he was imprisoned in the Tower in 1679, but he was proved innocent and released the next year. As a hobby Pepys was interested in scientific research, and in 1684 he was honored with the presidency of the Royal Society. The only book Pepys wrote for publication was his *Memoir of the Navy*, written after his retirement in 1688.

In his will Pepys left his excellent library, including his diary, to Cambridge University. The then unknown but now famous diary covers the period from January 1, 1660 to May 31, 1669, when weakening eyesight prompted its discontinuance. Written in very small handwriting, the diary fills six volumes. It is written in Shelton's tachygraphy, a system of shorthand published in 1641. Pepys complicated translation by inventing symbols of his own and using foreign languages to record passages he did not want his servants or "all the world" to see. It was not until 1825 that the diary was partly deciphered and published. The full diary was not published until 1879.

Because Pepys moved in influential circles and because he recorded what he saw and heard in great detail, his diary is of tremendous value to historians. To the casual reader the charm of the diary is its vivid reporting, its complete frankness, and its author's obvious enthusiasm for living.



Pepys' Diary



A Hanging

October 13, 1660. I went out to Charing Cross, to see Major General Harrison¹ hanged, drawn, and quartered; which was done there, he looking as cheerful as any man could do in that condition. He was presently cut down, and his head and heart shown to the people, at which there was great shouts of joy. It is said that he said that he was sure to come shortly at the right hand of Christ to judge them that now had judged him; and that his wife do expect his coming again. Thus it was my chance to see the King² beheaded at White Hall, and to see the first blood shed in revenge from the blood of the King at Charing Cross.

From thence to my Lord's,³ and took Captain Cuttance and Mr. Sheply to the Sun Tavern, and did give them some oysters. After that I went by water home, where I was angry with my wife for her things lying about, and in my passion kicked the little fine basket, which I bought her in Holland, and broke it, which troubled me after I had done it. Within all the afternoon setting up shelves in my study. At night to bed.

¹*Major General Harrison.* Harrison was one of the men who had signed the death warrant of Charles I.

²*the King.* Charles I was beheaded January 30, 1649.

³*my Lord's.* Sir Edward Montagu, first Earl of Sandwich, had served under Cromwell but later assisted in the restoration of Charles. At the time this entry was written Pepys was the earl's secretary.

Social Life

Nov. 22d, 1660. This morning came the carpenters to make me a door at the other side of my house, going into the entry, which I was much pleased with. At noon my wife and I walked to the Old Exchange, and there she bought her a white whisk⁴ and put it on, and I a pair of gloves, and so we took coach for White Hall to Mr. Fox's, where we found Mrs. Fox within, and an alderman of London paying £1,000 or £1,400 in gold upon the table for the King, which was the most gold that ever I saw together in my life. Mr. Fox came in pres-

⁴*a white whisk.* A small scarf worn around the neck.

⁵*the Queen and the two Princesses.* Charles' mother, Queen Henrietta Maria, and his sisters, Mary, princess of Orange, and Henrietta, later duchess of Orleans.

⁶*black patches.* It was fashionable then to wear beauty spots to set off a pale complexion.

ently and did receive us with a great deal of respect; and then did take my wife and I to the Queen's presence chamber, where he got my wife placed behind the Queen's chair, and I got into the crowd, and by and by the Queen and the two Princesses⁵ came to dinner. The Queen a very little plain old woman, and nothing more in her presence in any respect nor garb than any ordinary woman. The Princess of Orange I had often seen before. The Princess Henrietta is very pretty, but much below my expectation; and her dressing of herself with her hair frizzed short up to her ears did make her seem so much the less to me. But my wife standing near with two or three black patches⁶ on, and well dressed, did seem to me much handsomer than she. Dinner being done, we went



to Mr. Fox's again, where many gentlemen dined with us, and most princely dinner, all provided for me and my friends, but I bringing none but myself and wife, he did call the company to help to eat up so much good victuals. At the end of dinner, my Lord Sandwich's health was drunk in the gilt tankard that I did give to Mrs. Fox the other day. After dinner I took coach for my wife and me homewards, and I light at the Maypole in the Strand, and sent my wife home. I to the new playhouse and saw part of the *Traitor*, a very good tragedy; Mr. Moon did act the traitor very well. I went home on foot, it being very late and dirty, and so weary to bed.

Sunday

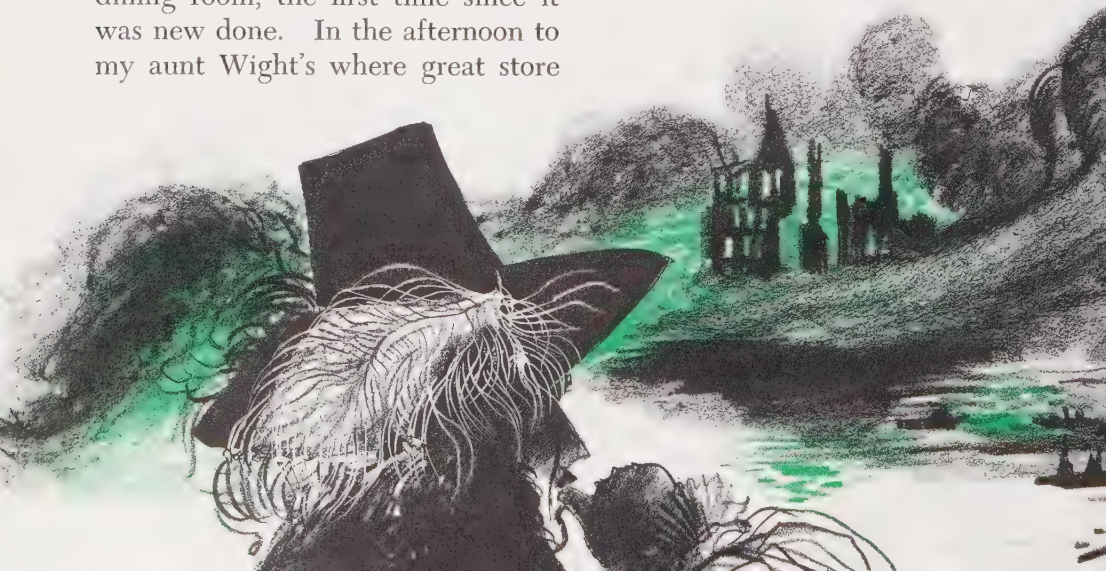
Dec. 7th, 1662. (Lord's Day.) A great snow, and so to church this morning with my wife, which is the first time she hath been at church since her going to Brampton. So home, and we dined above in our dining room, the first time since it was new done. In the afternoon to my aunt Wight's where great store

of her usual company, and here we stayed a pretty while talking, I differing from my aunt, as I commonly do, in our opinion of the handsomeness of the Queen,⁷ which I oppose mightily, saying that if my nose be handsome, then is hers, and such like.

The London Fire

Sept. 22nd, 1666. (Lord's Day.) Some of our maids sitting up late last night to get things ready against our feast today, Jane called us up about three in the morning, to tell us of a great fire they saw in the city. So I rose and slipped on my nightgown,⁸ and went to her window, and thought it to be on the back side of Mark Lane at the farthest; but, being unused to such fires as followed, I thought it far enough off; and so went to bed again and

⁷*the Queen.* Catherine of Braganza, whom Charles had married the preceding May.
⁸*nightgown.* Dressing gown.



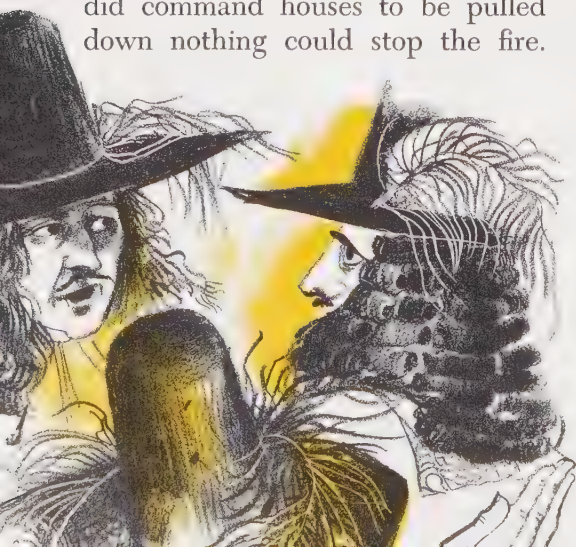
to sleep. About seven rose again to dress myself, and there looked out at the window, and saw the fire not so much as it was and farther off. So to my closet to set things to rights after yesterday's cleaning. By and by Jane comes and tells me that she hears that above 300 houses have been burned down tonight by the fire we saw, and that it is now burning down all Fish Street, by London Bridge. So I made myself ready presently, and walked to the Tower, and there got up upon one of the high places, Sir J. Robinson's little son going up with me; and there I did see the houses at that end of the bridge all on fire, and an infinite great fire on this and the other side the end of the bridge. So down, with my heart full of trouble, to the Lieutenant of the Tower, who tells me that it begun this morning in the King's baker's house in Pudding

Lane, and that it hath burned St. Magnus Church and most part of Fish Street already. So I down to the waterside, and there got a boat and through bridge, and there saw a lamentable fire. Poor Michell's house, as far as the Old Swan, already burned that way, and the fire running farther, that in a very little time it got as far as the Steel Yard, while I was there. Everybody endeavoring to remove their goods, and flinging into the river or bringing them into lighters⁹ that lay off; poor people staying in their houses as long as till the very fire touched them, and then running into boats, or clambering from one pair of stairs by the waterside to another. And among other things, the poor pigeons, I perceive, were loath to leave their houses, but hovered about the

⁹*lighters*. Flat-bottomed barges.



windows and balconies till they were, some of them burned, their wings, and fell down. Having stayed, and in an hour's time seen the fire rage every way, and nobody, to my sight, endeavoring to quench it, but to remove their goods, and leave all to the fire, and having seen it get as far as the Steel Yard, and the wind mighty high and driving it into the City; and everything, after so long a drought, proving combustible, even the very stones of churches, and among other things the poor steeple by which pretty Mrs. ——— lives, and whereof my old school-fellow Elborough is parson, taken fire in the very top, and there burned till it fell down; I to White Hall, with a gentleman with me who desired to go off from the Tower, to see the fire, in my boat; and there up to the King's closet in the Chapel, where people come about me, and I did give them an account dismayed them all, and word was carried in to the King. So I was called for, and did tell the King and Duke of York what I saw, and that unless his Majesty did command houses to be pulled down nothing could stop the fire.



They seemed much troubled, and the King commanded me to go to my Lord Mayor from him, and command him to spare no houses, but to pull down before the fire every way. The Duke of York bade me tell him that if he would have any more soldiers he shall; and so did my Lord Arlington afterward, as a great secret. Here meeting with Captain Cocke, I in his coach, which he lent me, and Creed with me to Paul's,¹⁰ and there walked along Watling Street, as well as I could, every creature coming away laden with goods to save, and here and there sick people carried away in beds. Extraordinary good goods carried in carts and on backs. At last met my Lord Mayor in Canning Street, like a man spent, with a handkerchief about his neck. To the King's message he cried, like a fainting woman, "Lord! what can I do? I am spent: people will not obey me. I have been pulling down houses; but the fire overtakes us faster than we can do it." That he needed no more soldiers and that, for himself, he must go and refresh himself, having been up all night. So he left me, and I him, and walked home, seeing people all almost distracted, and no manner of means used to quench the fire. The houses, too, so very thick thereabouts, and full of matter for burning, as pitch and tar, in Thames Street; and warehouses of oil, and wines, and brandy, and other things.

¹⁰Paul's. St. Paul's Cathedral.

Here I saw Mr. Issake Houblou, the handsome man, prettily dressed and dirty, at his door at Dowgate, receiving some of his brothers' things, whose houses were on fire; and, as he says, have been removed twice already; and he doubts (as it soon proved) that they must be in a little time removed from his house also, which was a sad consideration. And to see the churches all filling with goods by people who themselves should have been quietly there at this time.

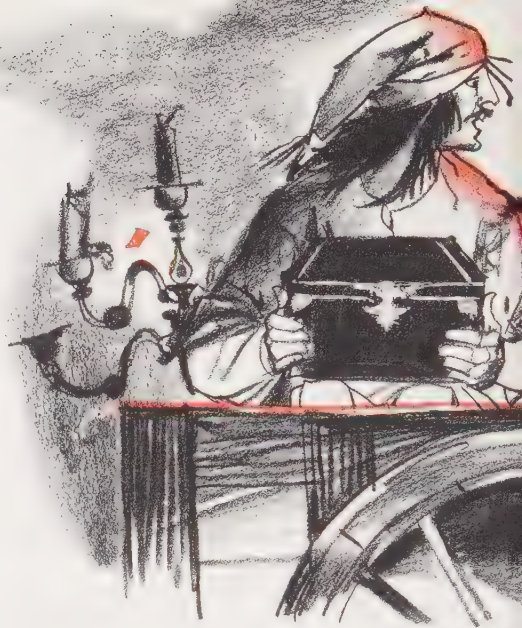
By this time it was about twelve o'clock; and so home, and there find my guests, which were Mr. Wood and his wife Barbary Sheldon, and also Mr. Moone: she mighty fine, and her husband, for aught I see, a likely man. . . . Soon as dined, I and Moone away, and walked through the city, the streets full of nothing but people and horses and carts laden with goods, ready to run over one another, and removing goods from one burned house to another. They now removing out of Canning Street (which received goods in the morning) into Lombard Street, and farther; and among others I now saw my little goldsmith, Stokes, receiving some friend's goods, whose house itself was burned the day after. We parted at Paul's; he home, and I to Paul's Wharf, where I had appointed a boat to

attend me, and took in Mr. Carcasse and his brother, whom I met in the street, and carried them below and above bridge to and again to see the fire, which was now got farther, both below and above, and no likelihood of stopping it. Met with the King and Duke of York in their barge, and with them to Queenhithe, and there called Sir Richard Browne to them. Their order was only to pull down houses apace, and so below bridge at the waterside; but little was or could be done, the fire coming upon them so fast. Good hopes there was of stopping it at the Three Cranes above, and at Buttolph's Wharf below bridge, if care be used; but the wind carries it into the City, so as we know not by the waterside what it do there. River full of lighters and boats taking in goods, and good goods swimming in the water, and only I observed that hardly one lighter or boat in three that had the goods of a house in, but there was a pair of virginals¹¹ in it. Having seen much as I could now, I away to White Hall by appointment, and there walked to St. James's Park, and there met my wife and Creed and Wood and his wife, and walked to my boat; and there upon the water again, and to the fire up and down, it still increasing, and the wind great. So near the fire as we could for smoke; and all over the Thames, with one's face in the wind, you were almost burned with a shower of fire-drops. This is very true; so as

¹¹*virginals*. A musical instrument resembling a spinet without legs. A single instrument was referred to as "a pair of virginals."

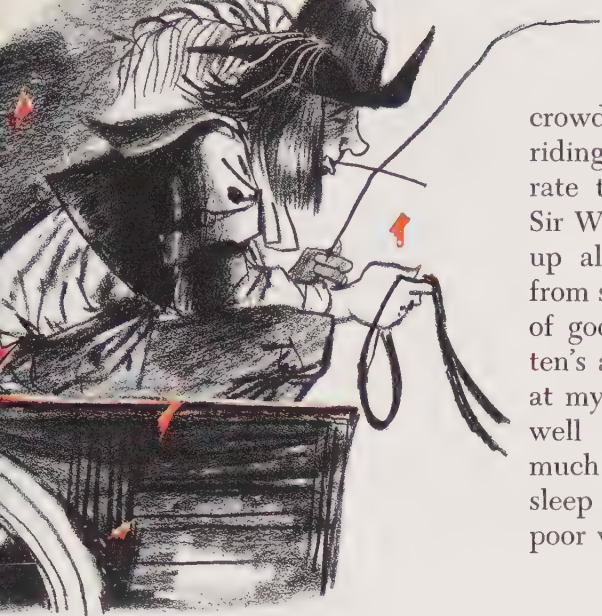
houses were burned by these drops and flakes of fire, three or four, nay, five or six houses, one from another. When we could endure no more upon the water, we to a little ale-house on the Bankside, over against the Three Cranes, and there stayed till it was dark almost, and saw the fire grow; and, as it grew darker, appeared more and more, and in corners and upon steeples, and between churches and houses, as far as we could see up the hill of the City, in a most horrid malicious bloody flame, not like the fine flame of an ordinary fire. Barbary and her husband away before us. We stayed till, it being darkish, we saw the fire as only one entire arch of fire from this to the other side of the bridge and in a bow up the hill for an arch of above a mile long: it made me weep to see it. The churches, houses, and all on fire and flaming at once; and a horrid noise the flames made, and the crackling of houses at their ruin.

So home with a sad heart, and there find everybody discoursing and lamenting the fire; and poor Tom Hater come with some few of his goods saved out of his house, which is burned upon Fish Street Hill. I invited him to lie at my house, and did receive his goods, but was deceived in his lying there, the news coming every moment of the growth of the fire; so as we were forced to begin to pack up our own goods, and prepare for their removal; and did by moonshine (it being brave



dry, and moonshine, and warm weather) carry much of my goods into the garden, and Mr. Hater and I did remove my money and iron chests into my cellar, as thinking that the safest place. And got my bags of gold into my office, ready to carry away, and my chief papers of accounts also there, and my tallies into a box by themselves. So great was our fear, as Sir W. Batten hath carts come out of the country to fetch away his goods this night. We did put Mr. Hater, poor man, to bed a little; but he got but very little rest, so much noise being in my house, taking down the goods.

3rd. About four o'clock in the morning, my Lady Batten sent me a cart to carry away all my money, and plate, and best things, to Sir. W. Rider's at Bednall Green. Which I did, riding myself in my nightgown in the cart; and, Lord! to see how the streets and the highways are



crowded with people running and riding, and getting of carts at any rate to fetch away things. I find Sir W. Rider tired with being called up all night, and receiving things from several friends. His house full of goods, and much of Sir W. Batten's and Sir W. Pen's. I am eased at my heart to have my treasure so well secured. Then home, with much ado to find a way, nor any sleep all this night to me nor my poor wife.

Discussion

1. We know, of course, that Pepys did not intend his Diary for publication. What evidence can you find in the Diary itself that would lead you to the same conclusion?
2. What personal qualities of Pepys are revealed in the Diary? Support your answers with quotations.
3. What makes the Diary an important historical document? Point out passages that you think must be valuable to historians.
4. Pepys is often called a "great reporter." Point out parts of his description of the fire that would be considered good reporting today.
5. What characteristics of Pepys' Diary entitle it to consideration as literature?

Research

1. If your library has *Everybody's Pepys*, or some other edition of the Diary, read as many additional entries as you have time for. Select one or two of your favorites to read to your classmates. If you find any interests or personal qualities not revealed in the selections studied in class, summarize them briefly in an oral report.
2. You will find it fun to try imitating Pepys' style. Copying it as closely as you can, keep a diary of your own for several days; then share it with your classmates.

JOHN EVELYN

1620–1706



JOHN EVELYN was born in Surrey, where his father owned large estates. After the age of five he was brought up by an indulgent grandmother. He did not attend preparatory school, probably because he didn't want to, rather than because opportunity was lacking. He enrolled briefly at Oxford and then studied law for a time in London. When civil war broke out in 1641, Evelyn joined Charles I's army, but he did not see action and soon returned to his brother's estate in Surrey. Two years later, when he was twenty-three, he went abroad, and except for brief visits stayed away from England for nine years. While in Paris in 1647 he married Mary Browne, daughter of the wealthy Sir Richard Browne. In 1652 the Evelyns returned to England and settled at Sayes Court, Deptford, just outside of London.

Following the restoration of the throne in 1660, Evelyn held a variety of minor offices and became a devoted civil servant. He stayed in London during the plague to look after the sick and wounded from the Dutch war. Government funds running out, Evelyn dipped into his own. He was one of the founders of the Royal Society, established in 1662 to promote scientific knowledge, and served as its secretary in 1672. Evelyn was a moderate in politics and took no part in court intrigues and party conflicts. He was a devout member of the Church of England and opposed the king's efforts to weaken its influence.

Evelyn was an expert on landscape gardening and architecture and a pioneer in afforestation, being responsible for the planting of several millions of trees in England. He wrote voluminously on each of these interests of his.

Evelyn is known today for the diary he kept from 1640 until three weeks before his death. Because of the long period it covers and because of the important people he knew, Evelyn's *Diary* is of tremendous value to historians. The student of literature finds in it many significant comments on writers such as Abraham Cowley, whom Evelyn admired, and Shakespeare, of whom he had this to say: "I have seen *Hamlet*, but now these old plays begin to disgust this refined century." Like his fellow diarist, Samuel Pepys, Evelyn had a consuming curiosity. Unlike Pepys, however, he would rather watch the world go by than take part in it. Nor did Evelyn share Pepys' love of gossip. Evelyn's *Diary* is both less frank and less revealing of its author's personality than Pepys'. Evelyn's *Diary* was not published until 1818, although historians had had access to it earlier.



Evelyn's Diary

The Great Fire

Sept. 2, 1666. This fatal night about ten, began that deplorable fire near Fish Street in London.

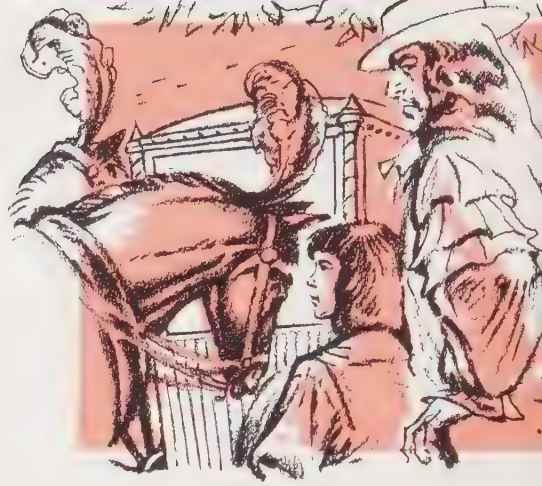
3. I had public prayers at home. The fire continuing, after dinner I took coach with my wife and son, and went to the Bankside in Southwark where we beheld the dismal spectacle, the whole City in dreadful flames near the water side; all the houses from the Bridge, all Thames Street, and upward toward Cheapside, down to the Three Cranes, were now consumed; and

so returned exceeding astonished what would become of the rest.

The fire having continued all this night (if I may call that night which was light as day for ten miles round about, after a dreadful manner) when conspiring with a fierce eastern wind in a very dry season; I went on foot to the same place, and saw the whole south part of the City burning from Cheapside to the Thames, and all along Cornhill (for it likewise kindled back against the wind as well as forward), Tower Street, Fenchurch Street, Gracious Street, and so along to Baynard's Castle, and was now taking hold of St. Paul's Church, to which the scaffolds¹ contributed exceedingly.

¹scaffolds. St. Paul's had fallen into decay and was in the process of being restored.

The conflagration was so universal, and the people so astonished, that from the beginning, I know not by what despondency or fate, they hardly stirred to quench it, so that there was nothing heard or seen but crying out and lamentation, running about like distracted creatures, without at all attempting to save even their goods; such a strange consternation there was upon them, so as it burned both in breadth and length, the churches, public halls, Exchange, hospitals, monuments, and ornaments, leaping after a prodigious manner from house to house and street to street, at great distances one from the other; for the heat with a long set of fair and warm weather had even ignited the air and prepared the materials to conceive the fire, which devoured after an incredible manner houses, furniture, and everything. Here we saw the Thames covered with goods floating, all the barges and boats laden with what some had time and courage to save, as, on the other side, the carts, etc., carrying out to the fields, which for many miles were strewn with movables of all sorts, and tents erecting to shelter both people and what goods they could get away. Oh, the miserable and calamitous spectacle! such as haply the world had not seen the like since the foundation of it, nor be outdone, till the universal conflagration of it. All the sky was of a fiery aspect, like the top of a burning oven, and the light seen above



40 miles round about for many nights. God grant mine eyes may never behold the like, who now saw above 10,000 houses all in one flame; the noise and cracking and thunder of the impetuous flames, and shrieking of women and children, the hurry of people, the fall of towers, houses, and churches, was like an hideous storm, and the air all about so hot and inflamed that at the last one was not able to approach it, so that they were forced to stand still and let the flames burn on, which they did for near two miles in length and one in breadth. The clouds, also, of smoke were dismal, and reached, upon computation, near 50 miles in length. Thus I left it this afternoon burning, a resemblance of Sodom, or the last day. It forcibly called to my mind that passage—*non enim hic habemus stabilem civitatem*;² the ruins resembling the picture of Troy. London was, but is no more. Thus I returned home.

²*non enim . . . civitatem*. "Here we have no abiding city." The quotation is from Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews.



The Death of Cowley

Aug. 1, 1667. I received the sad news of Abraham Cowley's death, that incomparable poet and virtuous man, my very dear friend, and was greatly deplored.

3. Went to Mr. Cowley's funeral, whose corpse lay at Wallingford House, and was thence conveyed to Westminster Abbey in a hearse with six horses and all funeral decency, near an hundred coaches of noblemen and persons of quality following; among these all the wits³ of the town, divers bishops and clergymen. He was interred next Geoffrey Chaucer and near to Spenser. A goodly monument has been since erected to his memory.

³*wits*. The intellectuals or educated people.

⁴*empirical*. Based on experiment.

The Death of Charles II

Feb. 4, 1685. I went to London, hearing his Majesty had been the Monday before (2 Feb.) surprised in his bedchamber with an apoplectic fit. On Thursday hopes of recovery were signified in the public Gazette, but that day, about noon, the physicians thought him feverish. . . . He passed Thursday night with great difficulty, when, complaining of a pain in his side, they drew two ounces more of blood from him; this was by 6 in the morning on Friday, and it gave him relief, but it did not continue, for being now in much pain, and struggling for breath, he lay dozing, and after some conflicts, the physicians despairing of him, he gave up the ghost at half an hour after eleven in the morning, being 6 Feb. 1685, in the 36th year of his reign, and 54th of his age. . . .

Thus died King Charles II, of a vigorous and robust constitution, and in all appearance promising a long life. He was a Prince of many virtues, and many great imperfections; debonair, easy of access, not bloody nor cruel; his countenance fierce, his voice great, proper of person, every motion became him; a lover of the sea, and skillful in shipping; not affecting other studies, yet he had a laboratory and knew of many empirical⁴ medicines, and the easier mechanical mathematics; he loved planting and building, and brought in a politer way of living, which



passed to luxury and intolerable expense. He had a particular talent in telling a story and facetious passages, of which he had innumerable; this made some buffoons and vicious wretches too presumptuous and familiar, not worthy the favor they abused. He took delight in having a number of little spaniels follow him and lie in his bedchamber. . . .

Certainly never had king more glorious opportunities to have made himself, his people, and all Europe happy, and prevented innumerable mischiefs, had not his too easy nature resigned him to be managed by crafty men, and some abandoned and profane wretches who corrupted his otherwise sufficient parts, disciplined as he had been by many afflictions during his banishment,

which gave him much experience and knowledge of men and things; but those wicked creatures took him off from all application becoming so great a king. The history of his reign will certainly be the most wonderful for the variety of matter and accidents, above any extant in former ages; the sad tragical death of his father,⁵ his banishment and hardships, his miraculous restoration, conspiracies against him, parliaments, wars, plagues, fires, comets, revolutions abroad happening in his time, with a thousand other particulars. He was ever kind to me, and very gracious upon all occasions, and therefore I cannot, without in-

⁵tragical death of his father. Charles I had been beheaded by order of Parliament in 1649.

gratitude, but deplore his loss, which for many respects, as well as duty, I do with all my soul. . . .

I can never forget the inexpressible luxury and profaneness, gaming and all dissoluteness, and as it were total forgetfulness of God (it being Sunday evening) which this day se'nnight I was witness of, the King

sitting and toying with his concubines, Portsmouth, Cleaveland, and Mazarine, etc., a French boy singing love songs, in that glorious gallery, whilst about twenty of the great courtiers and other dissolute persons were at basset⁶ round a large table, a bank of at least 2000 in gold before them; upon which two gentlemen who were with me made reflections with astonishment. Six days after was all in the dust! . . .

⁶*basset*. A card game in which chance rather than skill is the determining factor.

Discussion

1. What clues to Evelyn's character do you find in this selection?
2. What aspects of the fire most stirred Evelyn? Point out the phrases on which you base your opinion.
3. What does Cowley's funeral tell you about him? Which facts in the biographical sketch on page 213 bear out Evelyn's opinion of Cowley?
4. Charles II is described as "a Prince of many virtues, and many great imperfections." What virtues does Evelyn mention? What imperfections?
5. In what ways does Evelyn think Charles failed to take advantage of his "glorious opportunities"?
6. Why does Evelyn feel mixed emotions on the death of the king?

Research

1. If you can locate Evelyn's complete *Diary*, you could prepare a number of interesting reports. What does Evelyn have to say about the Great Plague, for instance?
2. You might look up Charles II in several encyclopedias and histories. How do the accounts in these books tally with Evelyn's judgments?
3. Compare Evelyn's *Diary* with that of Pepys. How do they differ in style? How do the characters of their authors differ? In what ways is each valuable to historians?



SAMUEL JOHNSON

1709–1784

SAMUEL JOHNSON was the son of Michael Johnson, an intelligent and cultured bookseller of Litchfield. The house in which Samuel was born is today a Johnson Museum. Samuel early showed signs of scrofula, or tuberculosis of the lymph glands, which distorted his features and impaired his vision. Although the boy was, and remained, lazy, he learned easily. He attended Oxford for about two years, before poverty forced him to leave.

For five years Johnson made a scant living tutoring and writing. In 1735 he married the widowed Mrs. Elizabeth Porter, who was twenty years his senior. In an attempt to support her he opened a school for boys near Litchfield. When the school failed, Johnson and David Garrick, who had been one of his three pupils, set out for London. A year of appalling poverty passed before Johnson secured employment on the then popular *Gentleman's Magazine*. In 1749 Garrick produced Johnson's play, *Irene*. It ran for only nine performances, but it provided Johnson temporary financial relief. From 1850 to 1852 Johnson edited the *Rambler*, a periodical patterned on the *Spectator*. In 1858 Johnson again attempted a periodical, this time called the *Idler*. It, too, lasted two years. Meanwhile Johnson had established his reputation with his famous *Dictionary*, published in 1755.

It was not until 1762, after George III had come to the throne, that Johnson was finally rescued from poverty by a pension of 300 pounds a year. In 1765 appeared one of Johnson's notable works, an edition of Shakespeare's plays with preface and notes. This was followed in 1779–81 by a ten-volume edition of English poets, with critical and biographical lives of the poets. The separate prefaces were later collected as *Lives of the Poets*, generally considered Johnson's best work.

It was Johnson's theory that literature should not merely entertain readers but should make them better people. He introduced his *Lives* with the hope that they were written "in such a manner as may tend to the promotion of piety." Johnson was a realist, too, and most of the poets emerge as truly human persons. In his style we recognize much of the conversational brilliance that Boswell later preserved for us. The sentences are often complicated and there is a high proportion of words of Latin origin. Nevertheless, Johnson deserves credit for increasing the flexibility of English prose.

(For Boswell and his biography of Johnson see page 165.)

Lives of the Poets

Joseph Addison

Addison had for some time been oppressed by shortness of breath, which was now aggravated by a dropsy; and, finding his danger pressing, he prepared to die conformably to his own precepts and professions.

During this lingering decay he sent, as Pope relates, a message by the Earl of Warwick¹ to Mr. Gay,² desiring to see him. Gay, who had not visited him for some time before, obeyed the summons, and found himself received with great kindness. The purpose for which the interview had been solicited was then discovered: Addison told him that he had injured him; but that, if he recovered, he would recompense him. What the injury was he did not explain, nor did Gay ever know; but supposed that some preferment designed for him had, by Addison's intervention, been withheld.

Lord Warwick was a young man

¹*Earl of Warwick.* Addison's stepson. Addison married the widowed Countess of Warwick in 1716.

²*Mr. Gay.* John Gay was a poet and playwright. He is remembered today for *The Beggar's Opera*, the first English musical comedy.

³*Tickell.* Thomas Tickell wrote a number of the *Spectator* essays. He collected and edited Addison's works after Addison's death.



of very irregular life, and perhaps of loose opinions. Addison, for whom he did not want respect, had very diligently endeavored to reclaim him; but his arguments and expositions had no effect. One experiment, however, remained to be tried; when he found his life near its end, he directed the young lord to be called; and when he desired, with great tenderness, to hear his last injunctions, told him, "I have sent for you that you may see how a Christian can die." What effect this awful scene had on the earl I know not; he likewise died himself in a short time.

In Tickell's³ excellent elegy on his friend are these lines:

*He taught us how to live; and oh!
too high
The price of knowledge, taught us
how to die.*

In which he alludes, as he told Dr. Young,⁴ to this moving interview.

Having given directions to Mr. Tickell for the publication of his works, and dedicated them on his death-bed to his friend Mr. Craggs, he died June 17, 1719, at Holland House, leaving no child but a daughter.

Of his virtue it is a sufficient testimony that the resentment of party has transmitted no charge of any crime. He was not one of those who are praised only after death; for his merit was so generally acknowledged that Swift, having observed that his election passed without a contest,⁵ adds, that if he had proposed himself for king he would hardly have been refused.

His zeal for his party did not extinguish his kindness for the merit of his opponents: when he was Secretary in Ireland he refused to intermit his acquaintance with Swift.⁶

Of his habits, or external manners, nothing is so often mentioned as that timorous or sullen taciturnity, which his friends called modesty by too mild a name. Steele mentions with great tenderness "that remarkable bashfulness, which is a cloak that hides and muffles merit"; and tells us that "his abilities were covered only by modesty, which doubles the beauties which are seen, and gives



credit and esteem to all that are concealed." Chesterfield affirms that "Addison was the most timorous and awkward man that he ever saw." And Addison, speaking of his own deficiency in conversation, used to say of himself that with respect to intellectual wealth, "he could draw bills for a thousand pounds though he had not a guinea in his pocket."

That he wanted current coin for ready payment, and by that want was often obstructed and distressed; that he was oppressed by an improper and ungraceful timidity, every testimony concurs to prove; but Chesterfield's representation is doubtless hyperbolic. That man cannot be supposed very unexpert in the arts of conversation and practice of life, who, without fortune or alliance, by his usefulness and dexterity, became Secretary of State; and who died at forty-seven, after having not only stood long in the highest rank of wit and literature,

⁴*Dr. Young.* Edward Young was a poet, playwright, and clergyman.

⁵*without a contest.* The reference is to Addison's election to Parliament in 1708.

⁶*he refused to intermit his acquaintance with Swift.* Swift was a Tory, whereas Addison was a Whig.



but filled one of the most important offices of State.

The time in which he lived had reason to lament his obstinacy of silence; for "he was," says Steele, "above all men in that talent called humor, and enjoyed it in such perfection that I have often reflected, after a night spent with him apart from all the world, that I had had the pleasure of conversing with an intimate acquaintance of Terence and Catullus,⁷ who had all their wit and nature, heightened with humor more exquisite and delightful than any other man ever possessed." This is the fondness of a friend; let us hear what is told us by a rival. "Addison's conversation," says Pope, "had something in it more charming than I have found in any other man. But this was only when familiar; before strangers, or perhaps a single stranger, he preserved his dignity by a stiff silence."

This modesty was by no means inconsistent with a very high opinion of his own merit. He demanded to be the first name in modern wit;

⁷*Terence and Catullus.* Terence was a Roman dramatist of the 2nd century B.C., and Catullus was a poet of the 1st century B.C.

and, with Steele to echo him, used to depreciate Dryden, whom Pope and Congreve defended against them. There is no reason to doubt that he suffered too much pain from the prevalence of Pope's poetical reputation; nor is it without strong reason suspected that by some disingenuous acts he endeavored to obstruct it; Pope was not the only man whom he insidiously injured, though the only man of whom he could be afraid.

His own powers were such as might have satisfied him with conscious excellence. Of very extensive learning he has indeed given no proofs. He seems to have had small acquaintance with the sciences, and to have read little except Latin and French; but of the Latin poets his *Dialogue on Medals* shows that he had perused the works with great diligence and skill. The abundance of his own mind left him little need of adventitious sentiments; his wit always could suggest what the occasion demanded. He had read with critical eyes the important volume of human life, and knew the heart of man from the depths of stratagem to the surface of affectation.

What he knew he could easily communicate. "This," says Steele, "was particular in this writer, that when he had taken his resolution, or made his plan what he designed to write, he would walk about a room and dictate it into language with as much freedom and ease as anyone

could write it down, and attend to the coherence and grammar of what he dictated."

Pope, who can be less suspected of favoring his memory, declares that he wrote very fluently, but was slow and scrupulous in correcting; that many of his *Spectators* were written very fast, and sent immediately to the press; and that it seemed to be for his advantage not to have time for much revisal.

"He would alter," says Pope, "anything to please his friends, before publication; but would not retouch his pieces afterwards; and I believe not one word in *Cato*,⁸ to which I made an objection, was suffered to stand." . . .

Of the course of Addison's familiar day, before his marriage, Pope has given a detail. He had in the house with him Budgell, and perhaps Philips. His chief companions were Steele, Budgell, Philips, Carey, Davenant, and Colonel Brett. With one or other of these he always breakfasted. He studied all morning; then dined at a tavern, and went afterwards to Button's.

Button had been a servant in the Countess of Warwick's family, who, under the patronage of Addison, kept a coffee-house on the south side of Russell Street, about two doors from Covent Garden. Here it was that the wits of that time used to assemble. It is said that when Addison suffered any vexation from the countess,⁹ he withdrew the company from Button's house.

From the coffee-house he went again to a tavern, where he often sat late, and drank too much wine. In the bottle, discontent seeks for comfort, cowardice for courage, and bashfulness for confidence. It is not unlikely that Addison was first seduced to excess by the manumission which he obtained from the servile timidity of his sober hours. He that feels oppression from the presence of those to whom he knows himself superior, will desire to set loose his powers of conversation; and who, that ever asked succor from Bacchus,¹⁰ was able to preserve himself from being enslaved by his auxiliary?

Among those friends it was that Addison displayed the elegance of his colloquial accomplishments, which may easily be supposed such as Pope represents them. The remark of Mandeville,¹¹ who, when he had passed an evening in his company, declared that he was a parson in a tie-wig, can detract little from his character; he was always reserved to strangers, and was not incited to uncommon freedom by a character like that of Mandeville.

⁸*Cato*. This was Addison's immensely popular tragedy produced in 1713.

⁹*the countess*. Addison and the countess were friends for many years before their marriage. She had become a widow in 1701.

¹⁰*Bacchus*. In Roman mythology the god of wine.

¹¹*Mandeville*. Bernard Mandeville was a physician and writer on ethical subjects. Since he was notably cynical and anti-religious, it is not likely Addison would have found him congenial.

From any minute knowledge of his familiar manners, the intervention of sixty years has now debarred us. Steele once promised Congreve and the public a complete description of his character; but the promises of authors are like the vows of lovers. Steele thought no more on his design, or thought on it with anxiety that at last disgusted him, and left his friend in the hands of Tickell.

One slight lineament of his character Swift has preserved. It was his practice when he found any man invincibly wrong, to flatter his opinions by acquiescence, and sink him yet deeper in absurdity. . . .

His works will supply some information. It appears from his various pictures of the world that, with all his bashfulness, he had conversed with many distinct classes of men, had surveyed their ways with very diligent observation, and marked with great acuteness the effects of different modes of life. He was a man in whose presence nothing reprehensible was out of danger;

quick in discerning whatever was wrong or ridiculous, and not unwilling to expose it. There are, says Steele, in his writings many oblique strokes upon some of the wittiest men of the age. His delight was more to excite merriment than detestation, and he detects follies rather than crimes.

If any judgment be made, from his books, of his moral character, nothing will be found but purity and excellence. Knowledge of mankind, indeed, less extensive than that of Addison, will show that to write, and to live, are very different. Many who praise virtue do no more than praise it. Yet it is reasonable to believe that Addison's professions and practice were at no great variance since, amidst that storm of faction in which most of his life was passed, though his station made him conspicuous, and his activity made him formidable, the character given him by his friends was never contradicted by his enemies. Of those with whom interest or opinion united him, he had not only the esteem, but the kindness; and of others, whom the violence of opposition drove against him, though he might lose the love, he retained the reverence.

It is justly observed by Tickell that he employed wit on the side of virtue and religion. He not only made the proper use of wit himself, but taught it to others; and from his time it has been generally subservient to the cause of reason and of truth. He has dissipated the



prejudice that had long connected gaiety with vice, and easiness of manners with laxity of principles. He has restored virtue to its dignity, and taught innocence not to be ashamed. This is an elevation of literary character, *above all Greek, above all Roman fame*.¹² No greater felicity can genius attain than that of having purified intellectual pleasure, separated mirth from indecency, and wit from licentiousness; of having taught

a succession of writers to bring elegance and gaiety to the aid of goodness; and, if I may use expressions yet more awful, of having *turned many to righteousness*.¹³

¹²*above all Greek, above all Roman fame.* A quotation from Pope's poem "To Augustus."

¹³*turned many to righteousness.* The complete quotation from *Daniel*, xii, 3 reads: "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

Discussion

1. Explain how Addison prepared to die "conformably to his own precepts."
What different interpretations of Addison's quietness does Johnson report? Where do you think the truth lies?
3. According to Johnson, in what area of knowledge was Addison best informed?
4. What does Johnson mean by saying of Addison, "He was a man in whose presence nothing reprehensible was out of danger"?
5. The last paragraph is high praise indeed! Considering it sentence by sentence, what exactly does it say about Addison?

Research

1. Additional "Lives" might well be assigned for reading and report by several members of the class. In each case check Johnson's account against that in one of the standard encyclopedias. Mention points of agreement and disagreement.
2. Interesting reports can be made on some of the contemporaries Johnson quotes. Try to determine whether or not each man might be considered a reliable source of information about Addison.
Biographer Johnson was himself the subject of a famous biography. Now, or later, be sure to compare Johnson's biographical techniques with those of Boswell revealed on pages 166–171.

JAMES BOSWELL was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, where his father was a judge and landowner. James studied law somewhat reluctantly and was admitted to the bar in 1766. Meanwhile, in 1763, he had made a trip to London and his fateful meeting with Samuel Johnson had occurred. Johnson was then fifty-four and the generally accepted literary dictator of England. Boswell immediately began to keep notes on Johnson's remarks, a practice he was to keep up for twenty years.

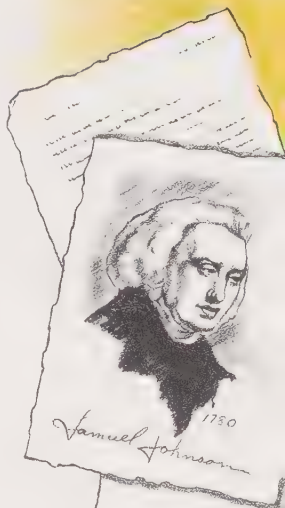
The famous biography, *The Life of Samuel Johnson*, appeared in 1791, seven years after the death of Johnson—seven years which Boswell had spent in organizing his incredible quantity of notes. The biography proved popular at once. Johnson's personality and character, which he had been unable to put into his own writing, came clearly through in Boswell's book.

With his masterpiece Boswell introduced new techniques in the field of biography. Here were direct quotations, the very words of the living subject. It is to Boswell we are indebted for the many remarks of Johnson's that have become familiar sayings: "Hell is paved with good intentions." "A man should keep his friendships in constant repair." "It matters not how a man dies, but how he lives." "He who praises everybody praises nobody."

Not only was Boswell's biography of Johnson an account of a man's life and works, but it was in itself a work of art. Boswell organized his mass of materials skillfully to give emphasis, balance, and contrast to his portrait. The society in which Johnson moved is subordinated to the character of Johnson, yet at no point does Johnson seem removed from his background. He becomes the dominating figure in a group picture, as he was in life.

Boswell portrays Johnson as witty and eccentric, rude and tender. Between the lines we glimpse that Johnson was more than this. Although life had treated him very badly, Johnson faced each trial with energy and courage. He is a truly great example of the endurance of the human spirit.

Many manuscripts of Boswell's, long believed lost and in some cases not even known to have existed, have come to light and been published in recent years, among them *Boswell's London Journal*, *Boswell in Holland*, and *Boswell in Search of a Wife*. The popularity of these books refutes a former claim that he was able to write a great biography only because he had a great subject.



The Life of Samuel Johnson

Early Education

He was first taught to read English by Dame Oliver, a widow, who kept a school for young children in Lichfield. He told me she could read the black letter, and asked him to borrow for her, from his father, a Bible in that character. When he was going to Oxford she came to take leave of him, brought him, in the simplicity of her kindness, a present of gingerbread, and said he was the best scholar she ever had. He delighted in mentioning this early compliment; adding, with a smile, that "this was as high a proof of his merit as he could conceive." His next instructor in English was a master, whom, when he spoke of him to me, he familiarly called Tom Brown, who, said he, "published a spelling book, and dedicated it to the Universe; but I fear no copy of it can now be had."

He began to learn Latin with Mr. Hawkins, usher, or undermaster, of Lichfield school—"a man," said he, "very skillful in his little way." With him he continued two years, and then rose to be under the care of Mr. Hunter, the head master, who, according to his account, "was very severe, and wrongheadedly severe."



He used," said he, "to beat us unmercifully; and he did not distinguish between ignorance and negligence; for he would beat a boy equally for not knowing a thing, as for neglecting to know it. He would ask a boy a question, and if he did not answer it, he would beat him, without considering whether he had an opportunity of knowing how to answer it. For instance, he would call up a boy and ask him Latin for a candlestick, which the boy could not expect to be asked. Now, sir, if a boy could answer every question, there would be no need of a master to teach him."

However, . . . Johnson was very sensible how much he owed to Mr. Hunter. Mr. Langton one day asked him how he had acquired so accurate a knowledge of Latin, in



which I believe he was exceeded by no man of his time; he said, "My master whipped me very well. Without that, sir, I should have done nothing." He told Mr. Langton that while Hunter was flogging his boys unmercifully, he used to say, "And this I do to save you from the gallows." Johnson, upon all occasions, expressed his approbation of enforcing instruction by means of the rod. "I would rather," said he, "have the rod to be the general terror to all, to make them learn, than tell a child, if you do thus, or thus, you will be more esteemed than your brothers or sisters. The rod produces an effect which terminates in itself. A child is afraid of being whipped, and gets his task, and there's an end on't; whereas, by exciting emulation and comparisons of

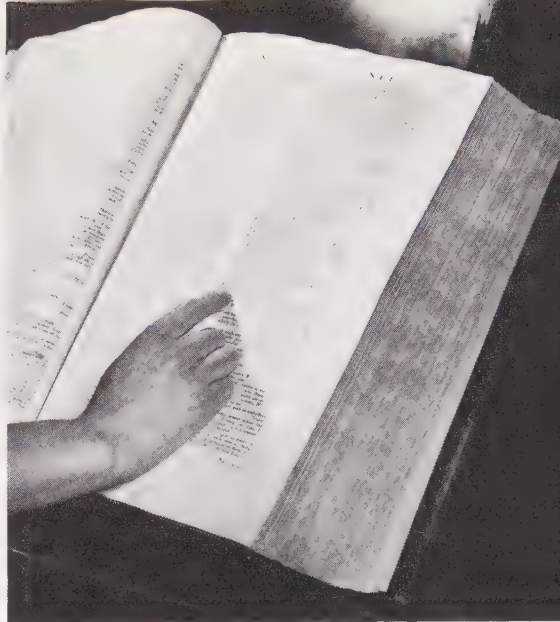
superiority, you lay the foundation of lasting mischief; you make brothers and sisters hate each other. . . ."

That superiority over his fellows which he maintained with so much dignity in his march through life, was not assumed from vanity and ostentation, but was the natural and constant effect of those extraordinary powers of mind, of which he could not but be conscious by comparison; the intellectual difference, which in other cases of comparison of characters is often a matter of undecided contest, being as clear in his case as the superiority of stature in some men above others. Johnson did not strut or stand on tiptoe; he only did not stoop. From his earliest years his superiority was perceived and acknowledged. He was from the beginning *anax andron*, a king of men. His schoolfellow, Mr. Hector, has obligingly furnished me with many particulars of his boyish days; and assured me that he never knew him corrected at school but for talking and diverting other boys from their business. He seemed to learn by intuition; for though indolence and procrastination were inherent in his constitution, whenever he made an exertion he did more than anyone else. In short, he is a memorable instance of what has been often observed, that the boy is the man in miniature; and that the distinguishing characteristics of each individual are the same through the whole course of life. His favorites used to receive very liberal assistance from

him; and such was the submission and deference with which he was treated, such the desire to obtain his regard, that three of the boys, of whom Mr. Hector was sometimes one, used to come in the morning as his humble attendants, and carry him to school. One in the middle stooped while he sat upon his back, and one on each side supported him, and thus he was borne triumphant. Such a proof of the early predominance of intellectual vigor is very remarkable, and does honor to human nature. Talking to me once himself of his being much distinguished at school, he told me, "they never thought to raise me by comparing me to any one; they never said, Johnson is as good a scholar as such a one; but such a one is as good a scholar as Johnson; and this was said but of one, but of Lowe; and I do not think he was as good a scholar."

The Famous Dictionary

While the Dictionary was going forward, Johnson lived part of the time in Holborn, part in Gough Square, Fleet Street; and he had an upper room fitted up like a counting-house for the purpose, in which he gave to the copyists their several tasks. The words, partly taken from other Dictionaries, and partly supplied by himself, having been first written down with spaces left between them, he delivered in writing their etymologies, definitions, and va-



rious significations. The authorities were copied from the books themselves, in which he had marked the passages with a black-lead pencil, the traces of which could be easily effaced. I have seen several of them in which that trouble had not been taken; so that they were just as when used by the copyists. It is remarkable that he was so attentive in the choice of the passages in which words were authorized that one may read page after page of his Dictionary with improvement and pleasure; and it should not pass unobserved that he has quoted no author whose writings had a tendency to hurt sound religion and morality.

The necessary expense of preparing a work of such magnitude for the press must have been a considerable deduction from the price stipulated to be paid for the copyright. I understand that nothing was allowed by the booksellers on that ac-

count; and I remember his telling me that a large portion of it having, by mistake, been written upon both sides of the paper, so as to be inconvenient for the compositor, it cost him twenty pounds to have it transcribed upon one side only. . . .

The definitions have always appeared to me such astonishing proofs of acuteness of intellect and precision of language as indicate a genius of the highest rank. This is what marks the superior excellence of Johnson's *Dictionary* over others equally or even more voluminous, and must have made it a work of much greater mental labor than mere lexicons, or word-books, as the Dutch call them. They who will make the experiment of trying how they can define a few words of whatever nature will soon be satisfied of the justice of this observation, which I can assure my readers is founded upon much study and upon communication with more minds than my own.

A few of his definitions must be admitted to be erroneous. Thus *windward* and *leeward*, though directly of opposite meaning, are defined the same way; nor was he at all disconcerted when an instance was pointed out to him. A lady once asked him how he came to define *pastern* "the knee of a horse";

¹*network*: "anything reticulated or decussated, at equal distances, with interstices between the intersections."

²*Jacobite*. The name applied to those who sought to restore the heirs of James II to the throne.

instead of making an elaborate defense, as she expected, he at once answered, "Ignorance, madam, pure ignorance." His definition of *network*¹ has often been quoted with sportive malignity, as obscuring a thing in itself very plain. But to these frivolous censures no other answer is necessary than that with which we are furnished by his own preface:

"To explain requires the use of terms less abstruse than that which is to be explained, and such terms cannot always be found."

His introducing his own opinions, and even prejudices, under general definitions of words, while at the same time the original meaning of the words is not explained . . . cannot be fully defended, and must be placed to the account of capricious and humorous indulgence. Talking to me upon this subject when we were at Ashbourne in 1777, he mentioned a still stronger instance of the predominance of his private feelings in the composition of this work than any now to be found in it. "You know, sir, Lord Gower forsook the old Jacobite² interest. When I came to *renegado*, after telling that it meant 'one who deserts to the enemy, a revolter,' I added, 'Sometimes we say a Gower.' Thus it went to the press, but the printer had more wit than I, and struck it out."

Let it, however, be remembered that this indulgence does not display itself only in sarcasm toward others, but sometimes in playful

Manuscript from Boswell's Diary describing his first meeting with Johnson.

allusion to the notions commonly entertained of his own laborious task. Thus: "*Grub Street*, the name of a street in London, much inhabited by writers of small histories, dictionaries, and temporary poems; whence any mean production is called *Grub Street*."—"Lexicographer, a writer of dictionaries, *a harmless drudge*."

Literary Criticism

Johnson was in high spirits this evening at the club, and talked with great animation and success. He attacked Swift, as he used to do upon all occasions. “The *Tale of a Tub* is so much superior to his other writings that one can hardly believe he was the author of it; there is in it such a vigor of mind, such a swarm of thoughts, so much of nature, and art, and life.” I wondered to hear him say of *Gulliver’s Travels*, “When once you have thought of big men and little men, it is very easy to do all the rest.” I endeavored to make a stand for Swift, and tried to rouse

those who were much more able to defend him; but in vain. Johnson at last, of his own accord, allowed very great merit to the inventory of articles found in the pocket of "the Man Mountain," particularly the description of his watch, which it was conjectured was His God, as he consulted it upon all occasions. He observed that "Swift put his name to but two things (after he had a name to put), *The Plan for the Improvement of the English Language* and the last *Drapier's Letter*. . . ."

Next day I dined with Johnson at Mr. Thrale's. He attacked Gray, calling him "a dull fellow." BOSWELL: "I understand he was reserved, and might appear dull in company; but surely he was not dull in poetry." JOHNSON: "Sir, he was dull in company, dull in his closet, dull everywhere. He was dull in a new way, and that made many people think him GREAT. He was a mechanical poet." He then repeated some ludicrous lines, which have escaped my memory, and said, "Is not that GREAT, like his Odes?" Mrs. Thrale maintained that his Odes were melodious; upon which he exclaimed,

*"Weave the warp, and weave the
woof";*

I added, in a solemn tone,

"The winding-sheet of Edward's race.

There is a good line.”—“Aye,” said he, “and the next line is a good one,” pronouncing it contemptuously,

“Give ample verge and room enough.

No, sir, there are but two good stanzas in Gray’s poetry, which are in his ‘Elegy in a Country Churchyard.’”³ He then repeated the stanza,

“For who to dumb forgetfulness a prey,” etc.,

³“Elegy in a Country Churchyard.” For the full poem see page 417.

mistaking one word; for instead of *precincts* he said *confines*. He added, “The other stanza I forget. . . .”


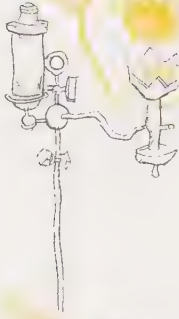

Talking of *The Spectator*, he said, “It is wonderful that there is such a proportion of bad papers in the half of the work which was not written by Addison; for there was all the world to write that half, yet not a half of that half is good. . . .”

Discussion

1. What are Johnson’s views on education? How do they compare with your own?
2. Discuss the difficulties of writing a dictionary.
3. Recall briefly Johnson’s comments on Swift, Gray, and Addison. If you are familiar with any of these writers, how do your opinions agree with Johnson’s?
4. Does Johnson seem conceited to you? In what other way can his remarks be interpreted?
5. Boswell’s biography has been called both objective and partial. Point out passages that seem to support each of these contentions.

Research

1. *The Life of Samuel Johnson* is a gold mine for reports of all kinds. Use the index to find Johnson’s opinions of his contemporaries: Sir Joshua Reynolds, David Garrick, Joseph Addison, Oliver Goldsmith, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, and others. Or look through the index for some topic that interests you and offers considerable material.
2. For a good abridged version to read in its entirety, look up Frank V. Morley’s *Everybody’s Boswell*.
3. Try your own hand at dictionary-making. Select perhaps twenty current slang expressions that you do not find in dictionaries and write your own definitions of them. Let your classmates pass judgment on your definitions.



ANTHONY TROLLOPE was born into a cultured and comfortably well-off London family, but financial reverses brought the family to bankruptcy before Anthony was out of his teens. His mother, at the age of fifty, turned to writing to support a family rapidly being decimated by the ravages of tuberculosis. Although the family's plight meant the end of Anthony's education and his taking a job as a postal clerk, he later wrote of these experiences without either sentimentality or self-pity.

Trollope's work for the post office extended from 1834 to 1867. Most of these years he was an inspector of rural mail service in Ireland and later in the south and west of England. On a number of occasions he also made official trips to various parts of the British Empire.

In 1844 Trollope married Rose Heseltine, and about the same time he began to write. His early novels, laid in Irish scenes, achieved publication largely on the strength of his mother's literary reputation and received little favorable notice. He attained his first real success with the publication of *The Warden* in 1855. It became the first of a series of novels dealing with the activities of clergymen and set in a fictitious Barsetshire and its cathedral city of Barset. The most famous book in the series, generally considered Trollope's masterpiece, is *Barchester Towers*, published in 1857. Trollope also wrote a political series, in which Parliament provides the unifying background.

In all, Trollope wrote more than fifty novels, a feat he was able to accomplish by rising early every morning and writing for two and a half hours at a rate of 250 words every fifteen minutes. Trollope's characters are real people, comfortably normal. His plots are unspectacular, and he develops his characters through a series of ordinary incidents.

Besides his novels Trollope wrote travel books, among them volumes on the West Indies, North America, South Africa, and Australia. He visited the United States during the Civil War, and his *North America* was published in 1862. He visited the United States again in 1868, this time in the interest of promoting an international copyright law for the protection of authors.

Trollope's autobiography, left in manuscript to his son, was published in 1883, the year after Trollope's death. It is a frank and fascinating document, revealing Trollope as a man of unquestionable sincerity and stubborn idealism. "My Mother" is Chapter II of the autobiography.

ANTHONY TROLLOPE

1815-1882

An Autobiography

Though I do not wish in these pages to go back to the origin of all the Trollopes, I must say a few words of my mother,—partly because filial duty will not allow me to be silent as to a parent who made for herself a considerable name in the literature of her day, and partly because there were circumstances in her career well worthy of notice. She was the daughter of the Rev. William Milton, vicar of Heckfield, who, as well as my father, had been

a fellow of New College. She was nearly thirty when, in 1809, she married my father. Six or seven years ago a bundle of love-letters from her to him fell into my hand in a very singular way, having been found in the house of a stranger, who, with much courtesy, sent them to me. They were then about sixty years old, and had been written some before and some after her marriage, over the space of perhaps a year. In no novel of Richardson's or Miss Burney's¹ have I seen a correspondence at the same time so sweet, so graceful, and so well expressed. But the marvel of these letters was in the strange difference they bore to the love-letters of the present day.

They are, all of them, on square paper, folded and sealed, and addressed to my father on circuit;² but the language in each, though it almost borders on the romantic, is beautifully chosen, and fit, without change of a syllable, for the most critical eye. What girl now studies the words with which she shall address her lover, or seeks to charm him with grace of diction? She dearly likes a little slang, and revels in the luxury of entire familiarity with a new and strange being. There is something in that, too, pleasant to our thoughts, but I fear that this phase of life does not conduce to a taste for poetry among our girls. Though my mother was a writer of prose, and revelled in satire, the poetic feeling clung to her to the last.

The first ten years of her married life she became the mother of six children, four of whom died of consumption at different ages. My elder sister married, and had children, of whom one still lives; but she was one of the four who followed each other at intervals during my mother's lifetime. Then my brother Tom and I were left to her, —with the destiny before us three of writing more books than were probably ever before produced by a single family. My married sister added to the number by one little anonymous high church story, called *Chollerton*.

From the date of her marriage up to 1827, when my mother went to

America, my father's affairs had always been going down in the world. She had loved society, affecting a somewhat liberal *role*, and profes-



sing an emotional dislike to tyrants, which sprung from the wrongs of would-be regicides and the poverty

²on circuit. Mr. Trollope was a lawyer and followed the assize court on its round of sessions in the various counties.

of patriot exiles. An Italian marquis who had escaped with only a second shirt from the clutches of some archduke whom he had wished



to exterminate, or a French *proletaire* with distant ideas of sacrificing himself to the cause of liberty,

³Miss Edgeworth. Maria Edgeworth, a popular novelist of the day, author of *Castle Rackrent*.

were always welcome to the modest hospitality of her house. In after years, when marquises of another caste had been gracious to her, she became a strong Tory, and thought that archduchesses were sweet. But with her politics were always an affair of the heart,—as, indeed, were all her convictions. Of reasoning from causes, I think that she knew nothing. Her heart was in every way so perfect, her desire to do good to all around her so thorough, and her power of self-sacrifice so complete, that she generally got herself right in spite of her want of logic; but it must be acknowledged that she was emotional. I can remember now her books, and can see her at her pursuits. The poets she loved best were Dante and Spenser. But she raved also of him of whom all such ladies were raving then, and rejoiced in the popularity and wept over the persecution of Lord Byron. She was among those who seized with avidity on the novels, as they came out, of the then unknown Scott, and who could still talk of the triumphs of Miss Edgeworth.³ With the literature of the day she was familiar, and with the poets of the past. Of other reading I do not think she had mastered much. Her life, I take it, though latterly clouded by many troubles, was easy, luxurious, and idle, till my father's affairs and her own aspirations sent her to America. She had dear friends among literary people, of whom I

remember Mathias, Henry Milman, and Miss Landon;⁴ but till long after middle life she never herself wrote a line for publication.

In 1828 she went to America, having been partly instigated by the social and communistic ideas of a lady whom I well remember,—a certain Miss Wright,—who was, I think, the first of the American female lecturers. Her chief desire, however, was to establish my brother Henry; and perhaps joined with that was the additional object of breaking up her English home without pleading broken fortunes to all the world. At Cincinnati, in the State of Ohio, she built a bazaar, and I fancy lost all the money which may have been embarked in that speculation. It could not have been much, and I think that others also must have suffered. But she looked about her, at her American cousins, and resolved to write a book about them. This book she brought back with her in 1831, and published it early in 1832. When she did this she was already fifty. When doing this she was aware that unless she could so succeed in making money, there was no money for any of the family. She had never before earned a shilling. She almost immediately received a considerable sum from the publishers,—if I remember rightly, amounting to two sums of £400 each within a few months; and from that moment till nearly the time of her death, at any rate for more than twenty years, she was in the receipt

of a considerable income from her writings. It was a late age at which to begin such a career.

The Domestic Manners of the Americans was the first of a series of books of travel, of which it was probably the best, and was certainly the best known. It will not be too much to say of it that it had a material effect upon the manners of the Americans of the day, and that the effect has been fully appreciated by them. No observer was certainly ever less qualified to judge of the prospects or even of the happiness of a young people. No one could have been worse adapted by nature for the task of learning whether a nation was in a way to thrive. Whatever she saw she judged, as most women do, from her own standing-point. If a thing were ugly to her eyes, it ought to be ugly to all eyes,—and if ugly, it must be bad. What though people had plenty to eat and clothes to wear, if they put their feet upon the tables and did not reverence their betters? The Americans were to her rough, uncouth, and vulgar,—and she told them so. Those communistic and social ideas, which had been so pretty in a drawing-room, were scattered to the winds. Her volumes were very bitter; but they were very

⁴*Mathias . . . Milman . . . Landon.* Thomas Mathias was a satirist and an Italian scholar; Henry Milman was a prominent clergyman and poet; Elizabeth Landon was a poet and novelist. All three were important literary figures in their day.

clever, and they saved the family from ruin.

Book followed book immediately, —first two novels, and then a book on Belgium and Western Germany. She refurnished the house which I have called Orley Farm, and surrounded us again with moderate comforts. Of the mixture of joviality and industry which formed her character, it is almost impossible to speak with exaggeration. The industry was a thing apart, kept to herself. It was not necessary that any one who lived with her should see it. She was at her table at four in the morning, and had finished her work before the world had begun to be aroused. But the joviality was all for others. She could dance with other people's legs, eat and drink with other people's palates, be proud with the lustre of other people's finery. Every mother can do that for her own daughters; but she could do it for any girl whose look, and voice, and manners pleased her. Even when she was at work, the laughter of those she loved was a pleasure to her. She had much, very much, to suffer. Work sometimes came hard to her, so much being required,—for she was extravagant, and liked to have money to spend; but of all people I have



known she was the most joyous, or, at any rate, the most capable of joy.

We continued this renewed life at Harrow for nearly two years, during which I was still at the school,⁵ and at the end of which I was nearly nineteen. Then there came a great catastrophe. My father, who, when he was well, lived a sad life among his monks and nuns, still kept a horse and gig. One day in March 1834, just as it had been decided that I should leave the school then, instead of remaining, as had been intended, till mid-summer, I was summoned very early in the morning, to drive him up to London. He had been ill, and must still have been very ill indeed when he submitted to be driven by any one. It was not till we had started that he told me that I was to put him on board the Ostend⁶ boat. This I did,

⁵*the school.* Harrow, located in the town of Harrow, was then, and still is, a famous boys' preparatory school.

⁶*Ostend.* Seaport in Belgium. Mr. Trollope was taking the quickest way out of the country.

driving through the city down to the docks. It was not within his nature to be communicative, and to the last he never told me why he was going to Ostend. Something of a general flitting abroad I had heard before, but why he should have flown the first, and flown so suddenly, I did not in the least know till I returned. When I got back with the gig, the house and furniture were all in the charge of the sheriff's officers.

The gardener who had been with us in former days stopped me as I drove up the road, and with gestures, signs, and whispered words, gave me to understand that the whole affair—horse, gig, and harness—would be made prize of if I went but a few yards farther. Why they should not have been made prize of I do not know. The little piece of dishonest business which I at once took in hand and carried through successfully was of no special service to any of us. I drove the gig into the village, and sold the entire equipage to the ironmonger for £17, the exact sum which he claimed as being due to himself. I was much complimented by the gardener, who seemed to think that so much had been rescued out of the fire. I fancy that the ironmonger was the only gainer by my smartness.

When I got back to the house a scene of devastation was in progress, which still was not without its amusement. My mother, through

her various troubles, had contrived to keep a certain number of pretty-pretties, which were dear to her heart. They were not much, for in those days the ornamentation of houses was not lavish as it is now; but there was some china, and a little glass, a few books, and a very moderate supply of household silver. These things, and things like them, were being carried down surreptitiously, through a gap between the two gardens, on to the premises of our friend Colonel Grant. My two sisters, then sixteen and seventeen, and the Grant girls, who were just younger, were the chief marauders. To such forces I was happy to add myself for any enterprise, and between us we cheated the creditors to the extent of our powers, amidst the anathemas, but good-humoured abstinence from personal violence, of the men in charge of the property. I still own a few books that were thus purloined.

For a few days the whole family bivouacked under the Colonel's hospitable roof, cared for and comforted by that dearest of all women, his wife. Then we followed my father to Belgium, and established ourselves in a large house just outside the walls of Bruges. At this time, and till my father's death, everything was done with money earned by my mother. She now again furnished the house,—this being the third that she had put in order since she came back from America two years and a half ago.

There were six of us went into this new banishment. My brother Henry had left Cambridge and was ill. My younger sister was ill. And though as yet we hardly told each other that it was so, we began to feel that that desolating fiend, consumption, was among us. My father was broken-hearted as well as ill, but whenever he could sit at his table he still worked at his ecclesiastical records.⁷ My elder sister and I were in good health, but I was an idle, desolate hanger-on, that most hopeless of human beings, a hobble-dehoy of nineteen, without any idea of a career, or a profession, or a trade. As well as I can remember I was fairly happy, for there were pretty girls at Bruges with whom I could fancy that I was in love; and I had been removed from the real misery of school. But as to my future life I had not even an aspiration. Now and again there would arise a feeling that it was hard upon my mother that she should have to do so much for us, that we should be idle while she was forced to work so constantly; but we should probably have thought it were the recognized condition of life for an old lady of fifty-five.

Then, by degrees, an established sorrow was at home among us. My brother was an invalid, and the horrid word, which of all words was

for some years after the most dreadful to us, had been pronounced. It was no longer a delicate chest, and some temporary necessity for peculiar care,—but consumption! The Bruges doctor had said so, and we knew that he was right. From that time forth my mother's most visible occupation was that of nursing. There were two sick men in the house, and hers were the hands that tended them. The novels went on, of course. We had already learned to know that they would be forthcoming at stated intervals,—and they always were forthcoming. The doctor's vials and the ink-bottle held equal places in my mother's rooms. I have written many novels under many circumstances; but I doubt much whether I could write one when my whole heart was by the bedside of a dying son. Her power of dividing herself into two parts, and keeping her intellect by itself clear from the troubles of the world, and fit for the duty it had to do, I never saw equalled. I do not think that the writing of a novel is the most difficult task which a man may be called upon to do; but it is a task that may be supposed to demand a spirit fairly at ease. The work of doing it with a troubled spirit killed Sir Walter Scott. My mother went through it unscathed in strength, though she performed all the work of day-nurse and night-nurse to a sick household;—for there were soon three of them dying.

At this time there came from

⁷*ecclesiastical records.* Mr. Trollope was working on an encyclopedia of all Christian denominations.

some quarter an offer to me of a commission in an Austrian cavalry regiment; and so it was apparently my destiny to be a soldier. But I must first learn German and French, of which languages I knew almost nothing. For this a year was allowed me, and in order that it might be accomplished without expense, I undertook the duties of a classical usher⁸ to a school then kept by William Drury at Brussels. Mr. Drury had been one of the masters at Harrow when I went there at seven years old, and is now, after an interval of fifty-three years, even yet officiating as clergyman at that place. To Brussels I went, and my heart still sinks within me as I reflect that any one should have intrusted to me the tuition of thirty boys. I can only hope that those boys went there to learn French, and that their parents were not particular as to their classical acquirements. I remember that on two occasions I was sent to take the school out for a walk; but that after the second attempt Mrs. Drury declared that the boys' clothes would not stand any further experiments of that kind. I cannot call to mind any learning by me of other languages; but as I only remained in that position for six weeks, perhaps the return lessons had not been as yet commenced. At the end of the six weeks a letter reached me, offering me a clerkship in the General Post Office, and I accepted it. Among my mother's dearest friends she reck-

oned Mrs. Freeling, the wife of Clayton Freeling, whose father, Sir Francis Freeling, then ruled the Post Office. She had heard of my desolate position, and had begged from her father-in-law the offer of a berth in his own office.

I hurried back from Brussels to Bruges on my way to London, and found that the number of invalids had been increased. My younger sister, Emily, who, when I had left the house, was trembling on the balance,—who had been pronounced to be delicate, but with that false-tongued hope which knows the truth, but will lie lest the heart should faint, had been called delicate, but only delicate,—was now ill. Of course she was doomed. I knew it of both of them, though I had never heard the word spoken, or had spoken it to any one. And my father was very ill,—ill to dying, though I did not know it. And my mother had decreed to send my elder sister away to England, thinking that the vicinity of so much sickness might be injurious to her. All this happened late in the autumn of 1834, in the spring of which year we had come to Bruges; and then my mother was left alone in a big house outside the town, with two Belgian women-servants, to nurse these dying patients—the patients being her husband and children—and to write novels for the suste-

⁸*classical usher.* Anthony was to be assistant teacher of Latin and Greek.



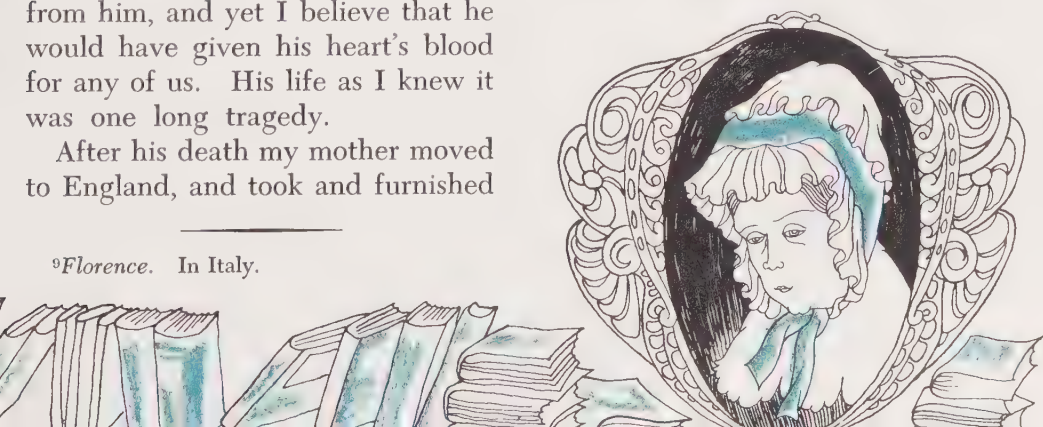
nance of the family! It was about this period of her career that her best novels were written.

Just before Christmas my brother died, and was buried at Bruges. In the following February my father died, and was buried alongside of him,—and with him died that tedious task of his, which I can only hope may have solaced many of his latter hours. I sometimes look back, meditating for hours together, on his adverse fate. He was a man, finely educated, of great parts, with immense capacity for work, physically strong very much beyond the average of men, addicted to no vices, carried off by no pleasures, affectionate by nature, most anxious for the welfare of his children, born to fair fortunes,—who, when he started in the world, may be said to have had everything at his feet. But everything went wrong with him. The touch of his hand seemed to create failure. He embarked in one hopeless enterprise after another, spending on each all the money he could at the time command. But the worst curse to him of all was a temper so irritable that even those whom he loved the best could not endure it. We were all estranged from him, and yet I believe that he would have given his heart's blood for any of us. His life as I knew it was one long tragedy.

After his death my mother moved to England, and took and furnished

a small house at Hadley, near Barnet. I was then a clerk in the London Post Office, and I remember well how gay she made the place with little dinners, little dances, and little picnics, while she herself was at work every morning long before others had left their beds. But she did not stay at Hadley much above a year. She went up to London, where she again took and furnished a house, from which my remaining sister was married and carried away into Cumberland. My mother soon followed her, and on this occasion did more than take a house. She bought a bit of land,—a field of three acres near the town,—and built a residence for herself. This, I think, was in 1841, and she had thus established and re-established herself six times in ten years. But in Cumberland she found the climate too severe, and in 1844 she moved herself to Florence,⁹ where she remained till her death in 1863. She continued writing up to 1856, when she was seventy-six years old,—and had at that time produced 114 volumes, of which the first was not written till she was fifty. Her career offers great encouragement to those who have not begun early in life, but are

⁹Florence. In Italy.



still ambitious to do something before they depart hence.

She was an unselfish, affectionate, and most industrious woman, with great capacity for enjoyment and high physical gifts. She was endowed, too, with much creative

power, with considerable humour, and a genuine feeling for romance. But she was neither clear-sighted nor accurate; and in her attempts to describe morals, manners, and even facts, was unable to avoid the pitfalls of exaggeration.

Discussion

1. What reasons does Anthony Trollope give for writing about his mother? How are the reasons supported by his account?
2. How did Mrs. Trollope's political views change as she grew older?
3. Why did Mrs. Trollope go to America?
4. What sort of book did she write about the Americans? What was her son's opinion of the book?
5. How does Anthony picture himself as a teenager? What makes the picture convincing?
6. What was Anthony's attitude toward novel-writing?
7. In what ways did Mrs. Trollope reveal real heroism?
8. What qualities did Trollope admire in his mother? What were his criticisms of her?
9. What revision does Anthony make in his opinion of his father? What was it about his father's life that gave Anthony cause for "meditating for hours together"?
10. In what ways was Anthony's early life good preparation for a novelist?

Research

1. If you were fascinated by this selection, you will find the whole autobiography equally interesting. The chapters telling how Trollope got his ideas and wrote his books are particularly revealing.
2. If you have not read *Barchester Towers*, now is the time to do so. Or if a political background appeals more to you than a church background, try *The Eustace Diamonds*.
3. For a delightfully readable biography of the whole family, look up *The Trollopes*, by Lucy and Richard Stebbins.

GILES LYTTON STRACHEY was born in London. His father was Sir Richard Strachey, for many years a government administrator in India, and an admirer of Viceroy Lord Lytton, whose name he gave to his son. Lady Strachey was a writer and a leader in the campaign for women's suffrage. Lytton was educated at Cambridge University, where he won the Chancellor's English medal for a poem titled "Ely." He began his professional literary career as a contributor to magazines. His first book was *Landmarks in French Literature*, published in 1912. This was followed in 1918 by *Eminent Victorians*, a book that was itself a landmark in the field of biographical writing.

Strachey was a thorough researcher in gathering facts, and then resorted to the techniques of the novelist when it came to writing. By carefully organizing his material he created suspense and built up dramatic moments. Taking over the long-established privilege of the novelist, he presented his subjects with wit and irony. By calling attention to his subjects' weaknesses and by imaginative re-creation of actual scenes he made real people seem as real as fictional characters.

The *Eminent Victorians*—and Strachey meant his title to be ironical—were Cardinal Manning, Florence Nightingale, Dr. Arnold, and General Gordon. The characteristic they had in common, according to Strachey, was that all four of them identified their own wills with the will of God. In a letter to his lifelong friend, Virginia Woolf, Strachey asked, "Is it prejudice, do you think, that makes us hate the Victorians, or is it the truth of the case?" Whatever his own answer was, Strachey showed definite animosity toward the Victorians.

The exception to Strachey's ill-will was Queen Victoria, the subject of his finest biography. Published in 1921, *Queen Victoria* is generally objective, sometimes ironical, and often affectionate. Always alert to tell-tale flaws and inconsistencies in character, Strachey concluded of the Queen, "The girl, the wife, the aged woman, were the same: vitality, conscientiousness, pride, and simplicity were hers to the latest hour." It was this biography, incidentally, that Strachey chose to dedicate to Mrs. Woolf.

Queen Victoria was followed in 1922 by *Books and Characters*, and in 1928 by *Elizabeth and Essex*, the most fictional of Strachey's biographies and the one that has proved most popular in the United States.



Queen Victoria

Victoria Becomes Queen

The King¹ had prayed that he might live till his niece was of age; and a few days before her eighteenth birthday—the date of her legal majority—a sudden attack of illness very nearly carried him off. He recovered, however, and the Princess was able to go through her birthday festivities—a state ball and a drawing-room²—with unperturbed enjoyment. “Count Zichy,” she noted in her diary, “is very good-looking in uniform, but not in plain clothes. Count Waldstein looks remarkably well in his pretty Hungarian uniform.” With the latter young gentleman she wished to dance, but there was an insurmountable difficulty. “He could not dance quadrilles, and, as in my station I unfortunately cannot valse and galop, I could not dance with him.” Her birthday present from the King was of a pleasing nature, but it led to a painful domestic scene. In spite of the anger of her Belgian uncle,³ she had remained upon good terms with her English one. He had always been very kind to her, and the fact that he had quarreled with her mother did not appear to be a reason for disliking him. He was, she said, “odd, very odd and singular,” but “his intentions were often ill in-



terpreted.” He now wrote her a letter, offering her an allowance of £10,000 a year, which he proposed should be at her own disposal, and independent of her mother. Lord Conyngham, the Lord Chamberlain, was instructed to deliver the letter into the Princess’s own hands. When he arrived at Kensington, he was ushered into the presence of the Duchess⁴ and the

¹*the King.* William IV, who ruled England from 1830 to 1837.

²*a drawing-room.* A formal reception.

³*her Belgian uncle.* King Leopold. He was her favorite uncle and his opinions usually carried considerable weight with her.

⁴*the Duchess.* Victoria’s mother, the Duchess of Kent. Victoria’s father had died shortly after she was born.



Princess, and, when he produced the letter, the Duchess put out her hand to take it. Lord Conyngham begged her Royal Highness's pardon, and repeated the King's commands.

Thereupon the Duchess drew back, and the Princess took the letter. She immediately wrote to her uncle, accepting his kind proposal. The Duchess was much displeased; £4,000 a year, she said, would be quite enough for Victoria; as for the remaining £6,000, it would be only proper that she should have that herself.

King William had thrown off his illness, and returned to his normal life. Once more the royal circle at Windsor—their Majesties, the elder Princesses, and some unfortunate Ambassadors or Minister's wife—might be seen ranged for hours round a mahogany table, while the Queen netted a purse, and the King slept, occasionally waking from his slumbers to observe "Exactly so, ma'am, exactly so!" But this recovery was of short duration. The old man suddenly collapsed; with no specific symptoms besides an extreme weakness, he yet showed no power of rallying; and it was clear to everyone that his death was now close at hand.

All eyes, all thoughts, turned toward the Princess Victoria; but she



still remained, shut away in the seclusion of Kensington, a small, unknown figure, lost in the large shadow of her mother's domination. The preceding year had in fact been an important one in her development. The soft tendrils of her mind had for the first time begun to stretch out toward unchildish things. In this King Leopold encouraged her. After his return to Brussels, he had resumed his correspondence in a more serious strain; he discussed the details of foreign politics; he laid down the duties of kingship; he pointed out the iniquitous foolishness of the newspaper press. On the latter subject, indeed, he wrote with some asperity. "If all the editors," he said, "of the papers in the countries where the liberty of the press exists were to be assembled,



we should have a *crew* to which you would *not* confide a dog that you would value, still less your honor and reputation." On the functions of a monarch, his views were unexceptionable. "The business of the highest in a State," he wrote, "is certainly, in my opinion, to act with great impartiality and a spirit of justice for the good of all." At the same time the Princess's tastes were opening out. Though she was still passionately devoted to riding and dancing, she now began to have a genuine love of music as well, and to drink in the roulades and arias of the Italian opera with high enthusiasm. She even enjoyed reading poetry—at any rate, the poetry of Sir Walter Scott.

When King Leopold learned that King William's death was approaching, he wrote several long letters of excellent advice to his niece. "In every letter I shall write to you," he said, "I mean to repeat to you, as a *fundamental rule, to be courageous, firm, and honest, as you have been till now.*" For the rest, in the crisis that was approaching, she was not to be alarmed, but to trust in her "good natural sense and the *truth*" of her character; she was to do nothing in a hurry; to hurt no one's *amour-propre*,⁵ and to continue her confidence in the Whig⁶ admin-

⁵*amour-propre*. Self-esteem.

⁶*Whig*. The Whigs had been in power since 1832. They favored social and political reforms, in contrast to the Tory, or conservative, party.

istration. Not content with letters, however, King Leopold determined that the Princess should not lack personal guidance, and sent over to her aid the trusted friend whom, twenty years before, he had taken to his heart by the death-bed at Claremont.⁷ Thus, once again, as if in accordance with some preordained destiny, the figure of Stockmar is discernible—inevitably present at a momentous hour.

On June 18, the King was visibly sinking. The Archbishop of Canterbury was by his side, with all the comforts of the church. Nor did the holy words fall upon a rebellious spirit; for many years his Majesty had been a devout believer. "When I was a young man," he once explained at a public banquet, "as well as I can remember, I believed in nothing but pleasure and folly—nothing at all. But when I went to sea, got into a gale, and saw the wonders of the mighty deep, then I believed; and I have been a sincere Christian ever since." It was the anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo, and the dying man remembered it. He should be glad to live, he said, over that day; he would never see another sunset. "I hope your Majesty may live to see many," said Dr. Chambers. "Oh! that's quite another thing, that's quite an-



other thing," was the answer. One other sunset he did live to see; and he died in the early hours of the following morning. It was June 20, 1837.

When all was over, the Archbishop and the Lord Chamberlain ordered a carriage, and drove post-haste from Windsor to Kensington. They arrived at the Palace at five o'clock, and it was only with considerable difficulty that they gained admittance. At six the Duchess woke up her daughter, and told her that the Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Conyngham were there, and wished to see her. She got out of bed, put on her dressing-gown, and went,

⁷*the death-bed at Claremont.* Ever since his wife's death, her physician, Dr. Stockmar, had been Leopold's confidential adviser. He remained as adviser to Victoria until his death in 1863.



alone, into the room where the messengers were standing. Lord Conyngham fell on his knees, and officially announced the death of the King; the Archbishop added some personal details. Looking at the bending, murmuring dignitaries before her, she knew that she was Queen of England. "Since it has pleased Providence," she wrote that day in her journal, "to place me in this station, I shall do my utmost to fulfill my duty toward my country; I am very young, and perhaps in many, though not in all things, inexperienced, but I am sure that very few have more real good will and more real desire to do what is fit and right than I have." But there was scant time for resolutions and reflections. At once, affairs were thick upon her. Stockmar came to breakfast, and gave some good advice. She wrote a letter to her uncle Leo-

pold, and a hurried note to her sister Feodora.⁸ A letter came from the Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne, announcing his approaching arrival. He came at nine, in full court dress, and kissed her hand. She saw him alone, and repeated to him the lesson which, no doubt, the faithful Stockmar had taught her at breakfast, "It has long been my intention to retain your Lordship and the rest of the present Ministry at the head of affairs"; whereupon Lord Melbourne again kissed her hand and shortly after left her. She then wrote a letter of condolence to Queen Adelaide. At eleven, Lord Melbourne came again; and at half past eleven she went downstairs into the red saloon to hold her first Council. The great assembly of lords and notables,

⁸her sister Feodora. Victoria's half-sister; the daughter of the Duchess of Kent by a previous marriage.

bishops, generals, and Ministers of State, saw the doors thrown open and a very short, very slim girl in deep plain mourning come into the room alone and move forward to her seat with extraordinary dignity and grace; they saw a countenance, not beautiful, but prepossessing—fair hair, blue prominent eyes, a small curved nose, an open mouth revealing the upper teeth, a tiny chin, a

clear complexion, and, over all, the strangely mingled signs of innocence, of gravity, of youth, and of composure; they heard a high unwavering voice reading aloud with perfect clarity; and then, the ceremony over, they saw the small figure rise and, with the same consummate grace, the same amazing dignity, pass out from among them, as she had come in, alone.

Discussion

1. What were Victoria's views on William IV?
2. Why did the King want his letter delivered to Victoria personally? Why did the Duchess of Kent resent this?
3. What advice did Uncle Leopold give Victoria when he learned she was about to become Queen? What was his opinion of the press?
4. What experience had "made a Christian" of William IV?
5. How do the two passages quoted from Victoria's journal differ in mood? What do the two entries reveal about Victoria's character?
6. What evidence is there that Victoria was off to a good start as Queen?
7. Find indications in the selection that it is based on documents and other factual sources. Point out several passages where Strachey apparently uses his imagination.

Research

1. If you found this selection interesting, you will undoubtedly enjoy the entire biography. Another approach to the Queen would be to read Laurence Housman's delightful play, *Victoria Regina*. A small group might like to prepare a scene or two for presentation before the class.
2. For a brief but typical example of Strachey's biographical technique you might try "Florence Nightingale," one of the four sketches in *Eminent Victorians*.





THE ESSAY

The essay as a literary type is generally described as a brief prose composition in which the writer reveals something of his background, his personality, and his tastes, along with facts and opinions. As distinguished from the present-day "article," with which it has some characteristics in common, the essay is deliberately artistic and literary in form and style. Whereas the article is valued chiefly for its timeliness, the essay is intended to be of lasting interest.

In contrast to most literary types, the exact origin of the English essay can be tracked down and dated. It was Francis Bacon who introduced the new form to English literature when, in 1597, he published ten short prose compositions that differed in content and style from anything that had previously appeared in print in England. Bacon borrowed the new form and his title, *Essays*, from a Frenchman, Michel de Montaigne. Montaigne had in 1582 published a group of short compositions in which he expressed his views on men and society. Although he disparagingly labeled his compositions *Essais*, a term meaning "attempts," it appears he was well aware that he had created a new literary form.

It is evident that Bacon read Montaigne's essays in French, for it was not until 1603 that an English translation of the *Essais* was published. Bacon expected limited appreciation for his work, but it proved popular far beyond his hopes. In 1612 he published a new edition with thirty-eight essays, and in 1625 a third edition with fifty-eight.

Perhaps because the new form was

flexible in structure and adaptable to a wide variety of subjects, it became from the very first an important type of English prose. Of all the literary forms it has remained throughout the centuries the most distinctively English medium of expression. It has never felt the influence of foreign forms, as have the novel and the drama.

A contemporary of Bacon's made a post-mortem contribution to the essay. This was Ben Jonson, whose reputation today rests on his poetry and plays. From time to time Jonson jotted down his thoughts on men and books. Four years after his death these papers were collected and published under the title *Timbers*. Of especial interest to later generations are some of Jonson's comments on his contemporaries. He wrote of Bacon:

No man ever spake more neatly, more pressly, more weightily, or suffered less emptiness, less idleness in what he uttered. No member of his speech but consisted of his own graces. His hearers could not cough, or look aside from him, without loss. He commanded where he spoke, and had his judges angry and pleased at his devotion. No man had their affections more in his power. The fear of every man that heard him was lest he should make an end.

After Bacon no English essayist of lasting importance appeared until the Restoration period. In 1668, following the death of Abraham Cowley, his executors found a manuscript titled "Several Discourses by Way of Essays." There were eleven of the essays. One of them, "Of Myself," was much admired by later writers. In content it was more personal, more intimate than anything Bacon had written. The language, too, was more informal, more

apparently casual. Because Cowley thus foreshadowed the later English essay, some critics call him, rather than Bacon, the father of the English essay.

A contemporary of Cowley's, Izaak Walton, also made an important contribution to the personal quality of the essay. Walton's essays, written in the form of conversations between a fisherman and a hunter, were published in 1653 under the title, *The Compleat Angler*. With simple warmth Walton conveyed to the reader his own deep-seated pleasure in fishing.

With the beginning of the eighteenth century the essay suddenly became a major current in the stream of English literature. We can date the new development accurately, for it began on April 12, 1709, with the first issue of a periodical called *The Tatler*. The first weekly newspaper had appeared in London in 1622 and the first daily in 1702. But it was Richard Steele who deserves credit for bringing together the newspaper and the essay. *The Tatler* was a small four-page publication issued two or three times a week. It did not carry news as such, but it did print informal, chatty comments on the news. There was also some social gossip. It was an essay, however, that was the chief attraction of each issue. The stated purpose of *The Tatler* was "to expose the false arts of life, to pull off the disguises of cunning, vanity, and affectations, and to recommend a general simplicity in our dress, our discourse, and our behaviour." Every effort was made to make the essays amusing as well as instructive.

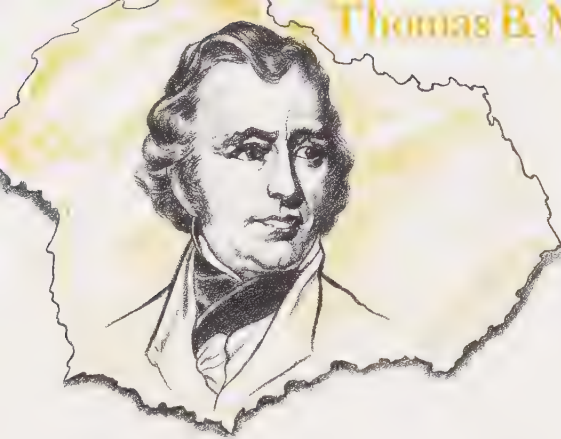
Most writers of the period wrote some essays, but none equalled Steele and the friend who soon joined him in his pub-

lishing venture, Joseph Addison. In 1711 the two friends started a successor to *The Tatler*, *The Spectator*. It was *The Spectator* which gave the world one of its best loved literary creations, a country gentleman named Sir Roger de Coverley, who gave a special flavor to the essays in which he appeared.

The versatile Oliver Goldsmith (see page 423) also wrote essays, among them a series which he called "The Citizen of the World." The fictional author of the essays was a cultured Chinese who was visiting London. The device gave Goldsmith an opportunity to satirize many aspects of English life. Goldsmith himself appears in the essays as "The Man in Black."

Samuel Johnson, who was a sort of literary dictator during the latter half of the eighteenth century, in his famous dictionary defined an essay as "an irregular, undigested piece." His own essays, however, belied the definition. They may be irregular in their construction or continuity, but their author put into them a good deal of carefully digested thought. Johnson's essays appeared in such successors to *The Spectator* as *The Rambler*, *The Adventurer*, and *The Idler*. Though modeled on Addison's, Johnson's essays are generally longer, heavier, more formal, more obvious in their moralizing.

Although it is generally assumed that the essay is a prose composition, there has been one notable exception. Alexander Pope, a contemporary of Addison and Steele, wrote several essays in heroic verse. While his *Essay on Criticism* and his *Essay on Man* are too formal and too systematic really to qualify as essays, his *Moral Essays*, were it not for their verse form, might well have



appeared in *The Spectator* without seeming out of place.

A second great revival of the essay occurred during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. The renewed popularity began with the publication in the August, 1820, issue of the *London Magazine* of Charles Lamb's first *Elia* essay. Lamb's essays continued over a period of years and were collected as the *Essays of Elia* in 1823 and 1833. *Elia* was a thinly fictionalized version of Lamb himself. With Lamb the essay returned to the highly personalized form Cowley had given it. With "Dream Children" Lamb reached a perfection in the informal essay that has not yet been surpassed, and his "Dissertation upon Roast Pig" is perhaps the most famous single essay that has ever been written.

It was during the time that Lamb was writing that English literature was moving into its great period of romanticism. While the new outlook was most obvious in poetry, it affected prose, too, the essay being the form that most quickly reflected the new mood. The essayist, who had often hidden himself behind a pseudonym, now began frankly to write about himself. He revealed his personal likes and dislikes and wrote of his slightest

whims, confident that his readers would be interested.

We see the new influence not only in Lamb's essays, but in those of his fellow writers, William Hazlitt and Thomas De Quincey. All three had been educated in the classics and retained some formality in their language, though Lamb became almost conversational in his style. De Quincey, who was most of his life a dope addict, shared his dreams and fantasies with his readers in a series of highly personal essays. It was Hazlitt who pioneered in turning the form and method of the essay to the uses of literary criticism. He did a notable service in reviving interest in Shakespeare and other Elizabethan dramatists.

As might be expected, the age of romanticism was followed by a period of realism and conservatism. Prose became sober again. The Victorian period was one of new theories, new scientific discoveries, rapid industrial expansion, and sweeping social and economic changes. These developments provided an abundance of serious problems for writers to discuss.

The Victorian essayists were mostly dedicated men, who felt that as writers they had a responsibility to instruct or inspire their readers—readers who were increasing rapidly with the greater educational opportunities. Among the chief essayists of the nineteenth century were Macaulay, Newman, Carlyle, Thackeray, Arnold, Ruskin, Huxley, and Stevenson. Among them all only Thackeray and Stevenson wrote anything even approaching the light, familiar essays of Addison and Lamb, and even Stevenson's best essays were serious in thought. Thackeray's essays,

though satirical and often funny, were pointedly critical.

In the field of the formal essay the greatest name of the period is Thomas Babington Macaulay. He won recognition with his first essay, on Milton, which was published in the *Edinburgh Review* in 1825. In contrast to most of the essayists of the preceding century, Macaulay made the form a strictly impersonal, though often controversial, discussion of some aspect of history, politics, or literature. He wrote in a clear and positive style that did much to popularize knowledge.

While Macaulay was praising the material advances of the age, another essayist, John Henry Newman, was calling his readers' attention to matters of the spirit. Newman was a leader in a religious revival, called the Oxford Movement from the place of its origin. Newman and his friends sought to restore to the Church of England some of the enthusiasm, poetry, mysticism, and spiritual force that had characterized Christianity in the Middle Ages. While Newman's purpose in writing was to promote a cause, he wrote with such simple sincerity and artistic distinction that his essays must be classified as literature.

Carlyle, who wrote in an original but difficult style, was a crusader for the gospel of hard work. Arnold, who began his literary career as a poet, became in later life a critic of great influence. He wrote many essays to point out the values for his own day of the great literature of the past. The theme that recurs again and again in his writing is the importance of each individual's search for "the best which has been thought and said in the world."

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century Stevenson came closer than any of his contemporaries to Addison's superb prose style and Lamb's quality of personal contact with his readers.

Twentieth-century essays are of all types, from scholarly criticism to whimsical playfulness. Among the notable essayists of the century are William H. Hudson, who wrote vividly and lovingly of nature; Arnold Bennett, John Galsworthy, and Virginia Woolf, better known as novelists; Max Beerbohm, who turned out humorous essays with the light touch of Addison; G. K. Chesterton, whose essays are always colorful and argumentative, and who is the creator of the famous detective, Father Brown; John B. Priestley, whose essays and lectures have done much to explain the English to Americans and Americans to the English; George Orwell, whom a critic has called "the conscience of his age," and who wrote often on world problems. *Such, Such Were the Joys* contains many of his best essays.

Our legacy of English essays is a rich one. Whatever our tastes or moods, there are writers who are "just for us." There are also the great landmarks of the essay, which are for everyone. No English-reading person can consider himself educated who has not read—and loved—the essays of Bacon, Addison, and Lamb.

George Orwell





1561-1626

FRANCIS BACON was born in London, where his father held the important post of Lord Keeper of the Great Seal for Queen Elizabeth. Francis was a highly intelligent boy and a keen student. He entered Cambridge University at the age of twelve. Four years later he went to France to spend two years with the English ambassador there. Upon his return to England, Bacon studied law. In 1584, when he was only twenty-three, he was elected to Parliament, where before long he was considered one of the best speakers. He worked hard to gain the queen's favor, but she seems never to have quite trusted him.

When James I succeeded Elizabeth in 1606 Bacon's political fortunes improved, and he rose rapidly from office to office until in 1617 he was appointed Lord Chancellor and raised to the peerage as Baron Verulam and Viscount St. Albans. His political greatness was short-lived, however. Convicted in 1621 of taking bribes, he was fined heavily and banished from court. Although he continued to hope for pardon, he devoted the last five years of his life to writing scientific and historical books.

Bacon did not cease studying when his formal education was over, nor did he let his political activities cancel his scholarly pursuits. In 1592 he wrote to his uncle, Lord Burleigh, "I confess that I have as vast contemplative ends as I have moderate civil ends; for I have taken all knowledge to be my province." While he did not achieve this optimistic goal, of course, his insistence on proceeding from fact to theory, rather than from theory to fact, in a sense made him the father of the modern scientific method.

One of the results of Bacon's studies was his *Essays*, the first ten of which were published in 1597. Two more editions followed, the last in 1625 containing fifty-eight essays. Although we consider the essays examples of excellent English prose, Bacon had them translated into Latin in the hope that they would thus be more likely to survive.

The essays are notable for their practical wisdom, their compactness, and for the neatly turned sentences which make so much of his advice memorable. Bacon often was able to condense whole volumes into a single meaning-packed sentence. "Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested," is only one example of this skill. Study of the two essays which follow will reveal many others. Bacon's own writings definitely deserve to be chewed and digested.

FRANCIS BACON

Of Friendship



It had been hard for him that spake it to have put more truth and untruth together in few words, than in that speech, *Whosoever is delighted in solitude is either a wild beast or a god.*¹ For it is most true that a natural and secret hatred and aversion toward society in any man hath somewhat of the savage beast; but it is most untrue that it should have any character at all of the

¹*Whosoever . . . god.* The quotation is from Aristotle's *Politics*.

²*Epimenides*, etc. Epimenides was a Cretan poet who was said to have slept in a cave for fifty-seven years. When he awoke he found himself endowed with miraculous wisdom. Numa was a legendary king whom the nymph Egeria taught lessons of wisdom and law. Empedocles was a student of the Greek philosopher Pythagoras. Apollonius was a Greek philosopher who studied in India.

divine nature; except it proceed, not out of a pleasure in solitude, but out of a love and desire to sequester a man's self for higher conversation—such as is found to have been falsely and feignedly in some of the heathen; as Epimenides the Candian, Numa the Roman, Empedocles the Sicilian, and Apollonius of Tyana;² and truly and really in divers of the ancient hermits and holy fathers of the church. But little do men perceive what solitude is, and how far it extendeth. For a crowd is not company; and faces are but a gallery of pictures; and talk but a tinkling cymbal, where there is no love. The Latin adage meeteth with it a little: *Magna civitas, magna solitudo* [a great city, a great

loneliness]; because in a great town friends are scattered; so that there is not that fellowship, for the most part, which is in less neighborhoods. But we may go further, and affirm most truly that it is a mere and miserable solitude to want true friends; without which the world is but a wildness; and even in this sense also of solitude, whosoever in the frame of his nature and affections is unfit for friendship, he taketh it of the beast, and not from humanity.

A principal fruit of friendship is the ease and discharge of the fullness and swellings of the heart, which passions of all kinds do cause and induce. We know diseases of stoppings and suffocations are the most dangerous in the body; and it is not much otherwise in the mind; you may take sarza to open the liver, steel to open the spleen, flowers of sulphur for the lungs, castoreum for the brain; but no receipt openeth the heart but a true friend; to whom you may impart griefs, joys, fears, hopes, suspicions, counsels, and whatsoever lieth upon the heart to oppress it, in a kind of civil shrift or confession.

It is a strange thing to observe how high a rate great kings and monarchs do set upon this fruit of friendship whereof we speak; so great, as they purchase it many times at the hazard of their own safety and greatness. For princes, in regard of the distance of their fortune from that of their subjects and servants, cannot gather this fruit,

except (to make themselves capable thereof) they raise some persons to be as it were companions and almost equals to themselves, which many times sorteth to inconvenience. The modern languages give unto such persons the name of favorites, or privadoes; as if it were matter of grace or conversation. But the Roman name attaineth the true use and cause thereof, naming them *participes curarum* [partners of cares]; for it is that which tieth the knot. And we see plainly that this hath been done, not by weak and passionate princes only, but by the wisest and most politic that ever reigned; who have oftentimes joined to themselves some of their servants; whom both themselves have called friends, and allowed others likewise to call them in the same manner; using the word which is received between private men. . . .

It is not to be forgotten what Comineus³ observeth of his first master, Duke Charles the Hardy; namely, that he would communicate his secrets with none; and least of all, those secrets which troubled him most. Whereupon he goeth on and saith that toward his latter time that *closeness did impair and a little perish his understanding*. Surely Comineus might have made the same judgment also, if it had pleased him, of his second master, Louis the Eleventh, whose closeness was in-

³*Comineus*. Phillippe de Comines (or Comineus) was a French diplomat and historian.

deed his tormentor. The parable of Pythagoras is dark, but true; *Cor ne edito: Eat not the heart*. Certainly, if a man would give it a hard phrase, those that want friends to open themselves unto are cannibals of their own hearts. But one thing is most admirable⁴ (wherewith I will conclude this first fruit of friendship), which is, that this communicating of a man's self to his friend works two contrary effects; for it redoubleth joys, and cutteth griefs in halves. (For there is no man that imparteth his joys to his friend, but he joyeth the more; and no man that imparteth his griefs to his friend, but he grieveth the less.) So that it is, in truth, of operation upon a man's mind, of like virtue as the alchemists use to attribute to their stone for man's body; that it worketh all contrary effects, but still to the good and benefit of nature. But yet without praying in aid of alchemists, there is a manifest image of this in the ordinary course of nature. For in bodies, union strengtheneth and cherisheth any natural action; and on the other side weakeneth and dulleth any violent impression; and even so is it of minds.

The second fruit of friendship is healthful and sovereign for the understanding, as the first is for the affections. For friendship maketh indeed a fair day in the affections, from storm and tempests; but it

maketh daylight in the understanding, out of darkness and confusion of thoughts. Neither is this to be understood only of faithful counsel, which a man receiveth from his friend; but before you come to that, certain it is that whosoever hath his mind fraught with many thoughts, his wits and understanding do clarify and break up, in the communicating and discoursing with another; he tosseth his thoughts more easily; he marshaleth them more orderly; he seeth how they look when they are turned into words. Finally, he waxeth wiser than himself; and that more by an hour's discourse than by a day's meditation. It was well said of Themistocles to the king of Persia *that speech was like cloth of Arras opened and put abroad, whereby the imagery doth appear in figure; whereas in thoughts they lie but as in packs*. Neither is this second fruit of friendship, in opening the understanding, restrained only to such friends as are able to give a man counsel (they indeed are best); but even without that, a man learneth of himself, and bringeth his own thoughts to light, and whetteth his wits as against a stone, which itself cuts not. In a word, a man were better relate himself to a statue or picture than to suffer his thoughts to pass in smother.

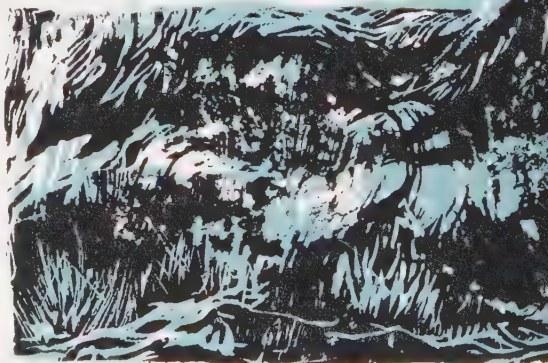
Add now, to make this second fruit of friendship complete, that other point which lieth more open and falleth within vulgar observation; which is faithful counsel from

⁴*admirable*. As used here the word means "remarkable."

a friend. Heraclitus saith well in one of his enigmas, *Dry light is ever the best*. And certain it is that the light that a man receiveth by counsel from another is drier and purer than that which cometh from his own understanding and judgment, which is ever infused and drenched in his affections and customs. So as there is as much difference between the counsel that a friend giveth, and that a man giveth himself, as there is between the counsel of a friend and of a flatterer. For there is no such flatterer as is a man's self; and there is no such remedy against flattery of a man's self as the liberty of a friend. Counsel is of two sorts: the one concerning manners, the other concerning business. For the first, the best preservative to keep the mind in health is the faithful admonition of a friend. The calling of a man's self to a strict account is a medicine, sometime too piercing and corrosive. Reading good books of morality is a little flat and dead. Observing our faults in others is sometimes improper for our case. But the best recipe (best, I say, to work, and best to take) is the admonition of a friend. It is a strange thing to behold what gross errors and extreme absurdities many (especially of the greater sort) do commit, for want of a friend to tell them of them; to the great damage both of their fame and fortune; for, as St. James saith,⁵ they are as men *that look sometimes into a glass, and presently forget their own shape and*



favor. As for business, a man may think, if he will, that two eyes see no more than one; or that a gamester seeth always more than a looker-on; or that a man in anger is as wise as he that hath said over the four and twenty letters;⁶ or that a musket may be shot off as well upon the arm as upon a rest; and such other fond and high imaginations, to think himself all in all. But when all is done, the help of good counsel is that which setteth business straight. And if any man think that he will take counsel, but it shall be by pieces; asking counsel in one business of one man, and in another business of another man; it is well (that is to say, better perhaps

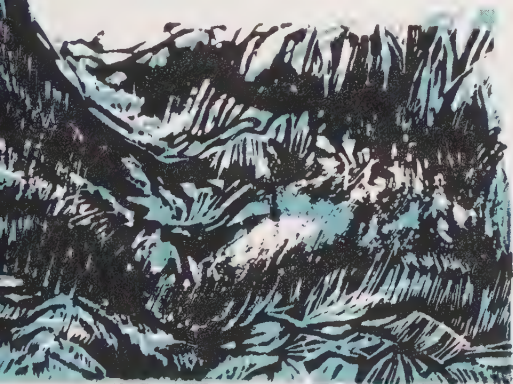


⁵St. James saith. *Epistle i*, 23-24.

⁶four and twenty letters. In Bacon's day I and J; and U and V were not differentiated.



than if he asked none at all); but he runneth two dangers: one, that he shall not be faithfully counseled; for it is a rare thing, except it be from a perfect and entire friend, to have counsel given, but such as shall be bowed and crooked to some ends which he hath that giveth it. The other, that he shall have counsel given, hurtful and unsafe (though with good meaning) and mixed partly of mischief and partly of



bestowing of a child. The custom of arranging for the future marriages of one's children.

remedy; even as if you would call a physician that is thought good for the cure of the disease you complain of, but is unacquainted with your body; and therefore may put you in way for a present cure, but overthroweth your health in some other kind; and so cure the disease and kill the patient. But a friend that is wholly acquainted with a man's estate will beware, by furthering any present business, how he dasheth upon other inconvenience. And therefore rest not upon scattered counsels; they will rather distract and mislead, than settle and direct.

After these two noble fruits of friendship (peace in the affections, and support of the judgment) followeth the last fruit, which is like the pomegranate, full of many kernels; I mean aid and bearing a part in all actions and occasions. Here the best way to represent to life the manifold use of friendship is to cast and see how many things there are which a man cannot do himself; and then it will appear that it was a sparing speech of the ancients, to say *that a friend is another himself*; for that a friend is far more than himself. Men have their time, and die many times in desire of some things which they principally take to heart; the bestowing of a child,⁷ the finishing of a work, or the like. If a man have a true friend, he may rest almost secure that the care of those things will continue after him. So that a man hath, as it were, two lives in his desires. A man hath a

body, and that body is confined to a place; but where friendship is, all offices of life are as it were granted to him and his deputy. For he may exercise them by his friend. How many things are there which a man cannot, with any face or comeliness, say or do himself? A man can scarce allege his own merits with modesty, much less extol them; a man cannot sometimes brook to supplicate or beg; and a number of the like. But all these things are graceful in a friend's mouth, which

are blushing in a man's own. So again, a man's person hath many proper relations which he cannot put off. A man cannot speak to his son but as a father, to his wife but as husband, to his enemy but upon terms; whereas a friend may speak as the case requires, and not as it sorteth with the person. But to enumerate these things were endless; I have given the rule, where a man cannot fitly play his own part; if he have not a friend he may quit the stage.

Discussion

Bacon claims that friendship is most likely to be found in small communities. What is your opinion?

2. What does Bacon consider the chief advantage of friendship? Do you agree with him?
3. Do you think that what Bacon says about the friendships of kings applies today to presidents, generals, and other leaders?
4. What does Bacon mean by saying, "There is no such remedy against flattery of a man's self as the liberty of a friend"?
5. Would you conclude from this essay that Bacon thinks one should choose friends who are younger or older than oneself? Support your answer with quotations. What is your own opinion?

Research

Bacon says it clarifies one's thoughts to express them to a friend. It also helps us to clarify our thoughts if we write them down. If friendship seems important to you, present your views in a brief essay. For your own sake you might give some thought as to whether or not you measure up to your own ideal of friendship.

Of Riches



I cannot call riches better than the baggage of virtue. The Roman word is better, *impedimenta*. For as the baggage is to an army, so is riches to virtue. It cannot be spared nor left behind, but it hindereth the march; yea, and the care of it sometimes loseth or disturbeth the victory. Of great riches there is no real use, except it be in the distribution; the rest is but conceit. So saith Solomon, *Where much is, there are many to consume it; and what hath the owner but the sight of it with his eyes?* The personal fruition in any man cannot reach to feel great riches: there is a custody of them; or a power of dole and donative of them; or a fame of them; but no solid use to the owner. Do you not see what feigned prices are set upon little stones and rari-

ties? and what works of ostentation are undertaken, because there might seem to be some use of great riches? But then you will say, they may be of use to buy men out of dangers or troubles. As Solomon saith, *Riches are as a strong hold, in the imagination of the rich man*. But this is excellently expressed, that it is in imagination, and not always in fact. For certainly great riches have sold more men than they have brought out. Seek not proud riches, but such as thou mayest get justly, use soberly, distribute cheerfully, and leave contentedly. Yet have no abstract nor friarly contempt of them. But distinguish, as Cicero saith well of

Rabirius Posthumus,¹ *In studio rei amplificandæ apparebat, non avaritiæ prædam, sed instrumentum bonitati quæri* [In seeking to increase his estate it was apparent that he sought not a prey for avarice to feed on, but an instrument for goodness to work with]. Harken also to Solomon, and beware of hasty gathering of riches: *Qui festinat ad divitias non erit insons*. [He that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.] The poets feign that when Plutus (which is Riches) is sent from Jupiter, he limps and goes slowly; but when he is sent from Pluto, he runs and is swift of foot; meaning, that riches gotten by good means and just labor pace slowly; but when they come by the death of others (as by the course of inheritance, testaments, and the like), they come tumbling upon a man. But it might be applied likewise to Pluto, taking him for the devil. For when riches come from the devil (as by fraud and oppression and unjust means), they come upon speed.

The ways to enrich are many, and most of them foul. Parsimony is one of the best, and yet is not innocent; for it withholdeth men from works of liberality and charity. The improvement of the ground is the most natural obtaining of riches; for it is our great mother's blessing, the earth's; but it is slow. And yet, where men of great wealth do stoop to husbandry, it multiplieth riches exceedingly. I knew a nobleman in England, that had the greatest

audits of any man in my time; a great grazier, a great sheepmaster, a great timberman, a great collier, a great cornmaster, a great leadman, and so of iron, and a number of the like points of husbandry: so as the earth seemed a sea to him, in respect of the perpetual importation. It was truly observed by one, that himself came very hardly to a little riches, and very easily to great riches. For when a man's stock is come to that, that he can expect the prime of markets, and overcome those bargains which for their greatness are few men's money, and be partner in the industries of younger men, he cannot but increase mainly. The gains of ordinary trades and vocations are honest, and furthered by two things chiefly: by diligence, and by a good name for good and fair dealing. But the gains of bargains are of a more doubtful nature; when men shall wait upon others' necessity, broke by servants and instruments to draw them on, put off others cunningly that would be better chapmen, and the like practices, which are crafty and naught. As for the chopping of bargains, when a man buys, not to hold, but to sell over again, that commonly grindeth double, both upon the seller and upon the buyer. Sharings do greatly enrich, if the hands be well chosen that are trusted. Usury is the certainest

¹Cicero . . . Rabirius Posthumus. When Posthumus was accused of extortion in 54 B.C., Cicero, the great Roman orator, defended him.

Essayes.

Religious Meditations.

Places of perswasion and disswasion.

Scene and allowed.



AT LONDON,

Printed for Humfrey Hooper, and are
to be sold at the blacke Beare
in Chauncery Lane.

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Title page, first edition, Bacon's *Essays*.

means of gain, though one of the worst; as that whereby a man doth eat his bread *in sudore vultus alieni* [in the sweat of another's brow], and besides, doth plow upon Sundays. But yet, certain though it be, it hath flaws; for that the scribes and brokers do value unsound men, to serve their own turn. The fortune in being the first in an invention, or in a privilege, doth cause sometimes a wonderful overgrowth in riches; as it was with the first sugar man in the Canaries: therefore if a man can play the true logician, to have as well judgment as invention, he may do great matters; especially if the times be fit. He that resteth upon gains certain, shall hardly grow to great riches: and he that puts all upon adventures, doth oftentimes break and come to poverty: it is good therefore to guard adventures with certainties that may uphold losses. Monopolies, and coemption of wares for resale, where they are not restrained, are great means to enrich; especially if the party have intelligence what things are like to come into request, and so store himself beforehand. Riches gotten by service, though it be of the best rise, yet when they are gotten by flattery, feeding humors, and other servile conditions, they may be placed

²*Tacitus . . . Seneca.* Tacitus was a severe critic of the corruption of many of his fellow Romans. As Nero's tutor, Seneca amassed wealth by means that might well have aroused criticism.

amongst the worst. As for fishing for testaments and executorships, as Tacitus saith of Seneca,² *testamenta et orbos tanquam indagine capi* [he took wills and wardships as with a net], it is yet worse; by how much men submit themselves to meaner persons than in service.

Believe not much them that seem to despise riches: for they despise them that despair of them; and none worse, when they come to them. Be not penny-wise; riches have wings, and sometimes they fly away of themselves, sometimes they must be set flying to bring in more. Men leave their riches either to their

kindred, or to the public; and moderate portions prosper best in both. A great state left to an heir, is as a lure to all the birds of prey round about to seize on him, if he be not the better stablished in years and judgment. Likewise glorious gifts and foundations are like *sacrifices without salt*; and but the painted

sepulchres of alms, which soon will putrefy and corrupt inwardly. Therefore measure not thine advancements by quantity, but frame them by measure: and defer not charities till death; for, certainly, if a man weigh it rightly, he that doth so is rather liberal of another man's than of his own.

Discussion

- 1 The second and third sentences are worth analyzing. What exactly do they mean? Are they applicable to life today?
- 2 What ways of acquiring wealth does Bacon mention? Does he approve more of some than of others?
- 3 Select half a dozen or so statements that seem to you to be worth remembering.
- 4 Which of Bacon's ideas in this essay strike you as modern in point of view.
- 5 Why do you think Bacon used so many Latin quotations in his essays?

Research

- 1 If you found "Of Friendship" and "Of Riches" thought-provoking, you can extend your experience by reading "Of Discourse," "Of Youth and Age," "Of Boldness," "Of Studies," or "Of Gardens." Your librarian can help you find some or all of these in various collections of essays.
- 2 Try your hand at an essay of your own. As topic sentence for your essay choose your favorite quotation from one of the two essays by Bacon you have just read.
- 3 As a class project you might compile and mimeograph a Guide to Living made up of useful statements from various essays of Bacon's read by members of the class.

1593-1683 IZAAK WALTON

IZAAK WALTON was born in Stafford. Nothing is known of his parents, but in his teens the boy was sent to London to be apprenticed to an ironmonger. By 1614 Walton had a small shop in Fleet Street, but whether he was dealing in ironware or in dry goods we do not know. We do know that he enjoyed getting out into the country as often as possible and that he had somehow learned to write remarkably clear prose.

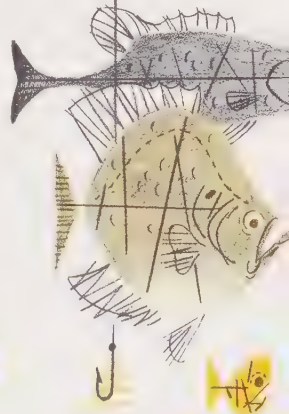
Over a period of almost forty years Walton wrote biographies of five contemporary poets, among them Donne, Hooker, and Herbert. The first, the life of Donne, appeared in 1640 and is one of the earliest English biographies.

Well known for his Royalist sympathies in the Civil War, Walton retired from business when Cromwell defeated the Cavaliers at Marston Moor in 1644. Thereafter he lived in the country on a small property he had bought near his birthplace. He traveled a good deal, paying long visits to fellow fishermen among his many friends.

Fishing was Walton's life-long recreation, and the book that brought him fame was a series of essays in dialogue form giving his observations on fish and man. First published in 1653, *The Compleat Angler* ran through five editions in Walton's lifetime, growing from thirteen chapters to twenty-one. For over three hundred years now *The Compleat Angler* has been a sort of fishermen's bible. Never has anyone succeeded more fully in putting into words the pure joys of fishing. With its misinformation and superstitions *The Angler* is hardly a reliable technical guide, but for those who love fishing, rather than the catching of fish, that is beside the point.

The book begins with a chance meeting of three outdoorsmen one May morning in Hertfordshire, on the road to Ware. They are the fisherman Piscator (Walton himself), the hunter Venator, and the falconer Auceps. Venator invites Piscator to go otter-hunting with him. Piscator accepts on the condition that Venator will go fishing with him the following day. On that occasion Piscator undertakes to instruct his young friend in the art of angling. The essay you are about to read is a selection from Chapter IV, where we find the instruction happily under way.

Besides his famous book, Walton has been immortalized in the name of the Izaak Walton League, organized for the "preservation of woods, waters, and outdoor life."



A Day with the Trouts



Piscator. Good-morrow, good hostess! I see my brother Peter is still in bed; come, give my scholar and me a morning drink, and a bit of meat to breakfast; and be sure to get a good dish of meat or two against supper, for we shall come home as hungry as hawks. Come, scholar, let's be going.

Venator. Well now, good master, as we walk towards the river give me direction, according to your promise, how I shall fish for a trout. . . .

Pisc. My honest scholar, it is now past five of the clock, we will fish till nine, and then go to breakfast. Go you to yon sycamore-tree and hide your bottle of drink under the hollow root of it; for about that time and in that place, we will make a brave breakfast with a piece of powdered¹ beef and a radish or two that I have in my fishbag; we shall, I warrant you make a good, honest, wholesome, hungry breakfast, and I will then give you direction for the making and using of your flies; and in the meantime there is your rod and line, and my advice is, that you fish as you see me do, and let's try which can catch the first fish.

Ven. I thank you, master, I will observe and practice your direction as far as I am able.

Pisc. Look you, scholar, you see I have hold of a good fish: I now see it is a trout. I pray you put that net under him, and touch not my line, for if you do, then we break all. Well done, scholar, I thank you.

Now for another. Trust me, I have another bite; come, scholar, come lay down your rod, and help me to land this as you did the other. So now we shall be sure to have a good dish of fish for supper.

Ven. I am glad of that; but I have no fortune: sure, master, yours is a better rod and better tackling.

Pisc. Nay, then, take mine, and I will fish with yours. Look you,

¹powdered. Seasoned.



scholar, I have another. Come, do as you did before. And now I have a bite at another. Oh me! he has broke all: there's half a line and a good hook lost.

Ven. Ay, and a good trout too.

Pisc. Nay, the trout is not lost; for pray take notice, no man can lose what he never had.

Ven. Master, I can neither catch with the first nor second angle: I have no fortune.

Pisc. Look you, scholar, I have yet another. And now, having caught three brace of trouts, I will tell you a short tale as we walk towards our breakfast. A scholar (a preacher I should say) that was to preach to procure the approbation of a parish, that he might be their lecturer, had got from his fellow pupil the copy of a sermon that was first

preached with great commendation by him that composed it; and though the borrower of it preached it, word for word, as it was at first, yet it was utterly disliked as it was preached by the second to his congregation; which the sermon-borrower complained of to the lender of it, and thus was answered: "I lent you, indeed, my fiddle, but not my fiddlestick; for you are to know that everyone cannot make music with my words, which are fitted to my own mouth." And so, my scholar, you are to know, that as the ill pronunciation or ill accenting of words in a sermon spoils it, so the ill carriage of your line, or not fishing even to a foot in a right place makes you lose your labour; and you are to know that though you have my fiddle, that is, my very good rod and tacklings

with which you see I catch fish, yet you have not my fiddlestick, that is, you yet have not the skill to know how to carry your hand and line, or how to guide it to a right place: and this must be taught you (for you are to remember, I told you angling is an art) either by practice or by a long observation, or both. But take this for a rule, when you fish for a trout with a worm, let your line have so much, and not more lead than will fit the stream in which you fish; that is to say, more in a great troublesome stream than in a smaller that is quieter; as near as may be, so much as will sink the bait to the bottom, and keep it in motion, and not more.

But now, let's say grace and fall to breakfast; what say you, scholar, to the providence of an old angler? Does not this meat taste well? and was not this place well chosen to eat it? for this sycamore-tree will shade us from the sun's heat.

Ven. All excellent good, and my stomach excellent good too. And now I remember and find that true

which devout Lessius says: "That poor men, and those that fast often have much more pleasure in eating than rich men and gluttons, that always feed before their stomachs are empty of their last meal, and call for more; for by that means they rob themselves of that pleasure that hunger brings to poor men." And I do seriously approve of that saying of yours "that you would rather be a civil, well-governed, well-grounded, temperate, poor angler than a drunken lord." But I hope there is none such; however, I am certain of this, that I have been at very many costly dinners that have not afforded me half the content that this has done, for which I thank God and you.

Pisc. And now, scholar, I think it will be time to repair to our angle-rods, which we left in the water to fish for themselves; and you shall choose which shall be yours; and it is an even lay which of them catches.

And, let me tell you, this kind of fishing with a dead rod, and laying night-hooks, are like putting money to use; for they both work for the owners when they do nothing but eat, sleep or rejoice, as you know we



have done this last hour, and sat as quietly and as free from cares under the sycamore as Virgil's Tityrus and his Meliboeus did under their broad beech-tree. No life, my honest scholar, no life so happy and so pleasant as the life of the well-governed angler, for when the lawyer is swallowed up with business, and the statesman is preventing or contriving plots, then we sit on cowslip banks, hear the birds sing, and possess ourselves in as much quietness as these silent silver streams, which we now see glide so quietly by us. Indeed, my good scholar, we may say of angling, as Dr. Boteler said of strawberries, "Doubtless, God could have made a better berry, but doubtless God never did"; and so (if I might be judge) "God never did make a more calm, quiet, innocent recreation than angling."

But, I pray, forget not the catch which you promised to make against night; for our countryman, honest Corydon will expect your catch, and my song, which I must be forced to patch up, for it is so long since I learned it that I have forgotten a part of it. But come, now it hath done raining, let's stretch our legs a little in a gentle walk to the river, and try what interest our angles will pay us for lending them so long to be used by the trout; lent them, indeed, like usurers, for our profit and their destruction.

Ven. Oh me! Look you, master, a fish! a fish! Oh, alas, master, I have lost her!



Pisc. Ay, marry, sir, that was a good fish indeed; if I had had the luck to have taken up that rod, then 'tis twenty to one he should not have broke my line by running to the rod's end as you suffered him. I would have held him within the bent of my rod (unless he had been fellow to the great trout that is near an ell long, which was of such length and depth that he had his picture drawn, and now is to be seen at mine host Rickabie's, at the George, in Ware), and it may be by giving that very great trout the rod, that is, by casting it to him into the water, I might have caught him at the long run; for so I used always to do when I meet with an overgrown fish; and you will learn

to do so too hereafter; for I tell you, fishing is an art; or, at least, it is an art to catch fish. . . .

Ven. But, master, will this trout which I had hold of die? for it is like he hath the hook in his belly.

Pisc. I will tell you, scholar, that unless the hook be fast in his very gorge, 'tis more than probable he will live; and a little time, with the help of the water, will rust the hook, and it will in time wear away; as the gravel doth in the horse-hoof, which only leaves a false quarter.

And now, scholar, let's go to my rod. Look you, scholar, I have a fish too, but it proves a logger-headed chub; and this is not much amiss, for this will pleasure some poor body, as we go to our lodging to meet our brother Peter and honest Corydon. Come, now bait your hook again, and lay it into the water, for it rains again; and we will even retire to the sycamore-tree, and there I will give you more directions concerning fishing; for I would fain make you an artist.

Discussion

1. What does Piscator's first speech tell us about him?
2. Describe the equipment the men used to catch trout.
3. What purpose is served by the story of the preacher and the borrowed sermon?
4. What besides the catching of fish made the morning pleasant?
5. How does Walton use the device of "contrast" to make angling seem attractive?

Research

1. If your library has *The Compleat Angler*, you might read a chapter or two and report to your classmates some of Walton's other comments on fishing.
2. An American writer, Henry Van Dyke, has written two books on fishing you might enjoy, *Little Rivers* and *Fisherman's Luck*.
3. If you are a fisherman yourself, what advice would you give a friend who had never gone fishing? Using Walton's dialogue form, write a modern essay on catching trout, or some other fish. Or if you prefer another sport, see if you can make it seem as attractive as Walton does fishing.

A BRAHAM COWLEY was born in London, shortly after the death of his father, who had been a prosperous stationer. Abraham was an unusually bright boy, and, inspired by reading the poetry of Edmund Spenser, he was writing poems himself before he reached his teens. A collection of his poems, *Poetical Blossoms*, was published when he was fourteen, and he was famous by the time he was fifteen.

In 1637 Cowley entered Cambridge University, where he was soon writing poems and plays in Latin as well as in English. The university awarded him a fellowship, and he might have spent his life there had it not been for the outbreak of the Civil War. When Cromwell's army defeated the royal forces at the Battle of Marston Moor in 1644, Cowley helped Queen Henrietta Maria and her young son escape to Paris, while the king fled to Scotland to reorganize his forces.

For twelve years Cowley served the exiled queen. He handled all her correspondence with the king until the king's capture and execution in 1649, coding and decoding their secret letters. He also made a number of dangerous journeys in support of various royal plots to regain the throne of England.

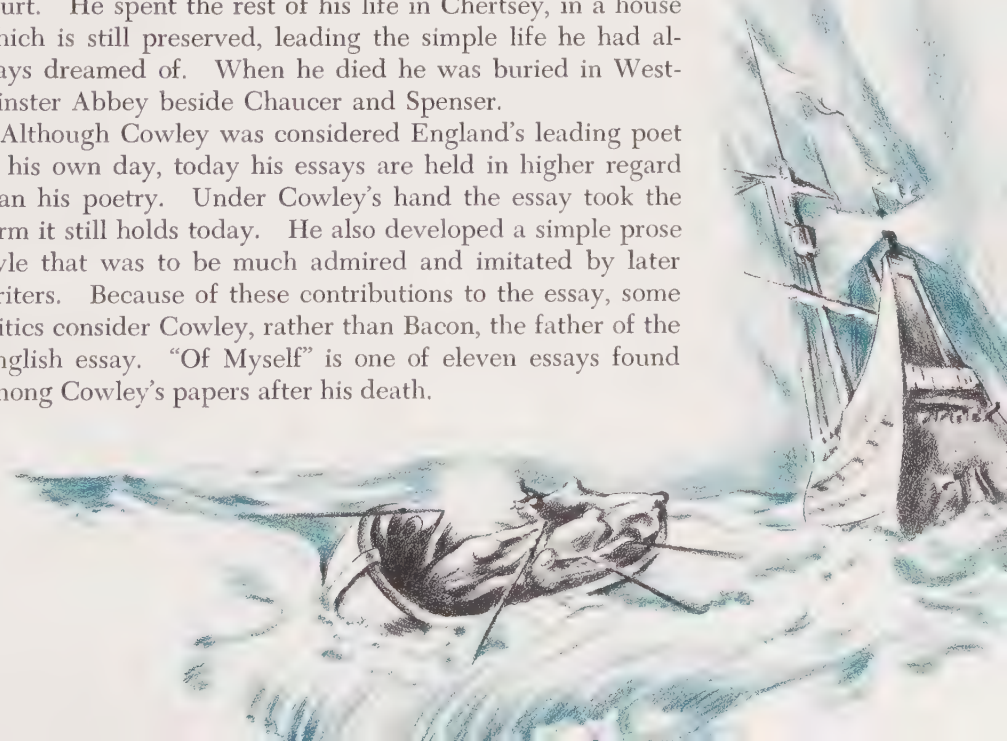
When the queen's eldest son ascended the throne as Charles II in 1660, Cowley returned to England with him. He requested, and was granted, permission to leave the court. He spent the rest of his life in Chertsey, in a house which is still preserved, leading the simple life he had always dreamed of. When he died he was buried in Westminster Abbey beside Chaucer and Spenser.

Although Cowley was considered England's leading poet in his own day, today his essays are held in higher regard than his poetry. Under Cowley's hand the essay took the form it still holds today. He also developed a simple prose style that was to be much admired and imitated by later writers. Because of these contributions to the essay, some critics consider Cowley, rather than Bacon, the father of the English essay. "Of Myself" is one of eleven essays found among Cowley's papers after his death.

ABRAHAM COWLEY



1618–1667



Of Myself



It is a hard and nice subject for a man to write of himself; it grates his own heart to say anything of disparagement, and the reader's ears to hear anything of praise from him. There is no danger from me of offending him in this kind; neither my mind, nor my body, nor my fortune, allow me any materials for that vanity. It is sufficient, for my own contentment, that they have preserved me from being scandalous, or remarkable on the defective side. But besides that, I shall here speak of myself only in relation to the subject of these precedent discourses, and shall be likelier thereby to fall into the contempt, than rise up to the estimation of most people. As far as my memory can return back into my past life, before I knew or was capable of guessing what the world, or

glories, or business of it were, the natural affections of my soul gave a secret bent of aversion from them, as some plants are said to turn away from others, by an antipathy imperceptible to themselves, and inscrutable to man's understanding. Even when I was a very young boy at school, instead of running about on holidays, and playing with my fellows, I was wont to steal from them, and walk into the fields, either alone with a book, or with some one companion, if I could find any of the same temper. I was then, too, so much an enemy to constraint, that my masters could never prevail on me, by any persuasions or encouragements, to learn, without book, the common rules of grammar, in which they dispensed with me alone, because they found I made a shift to

do the usual exercise out of my own reading and observation. That I was then of the same mind as I am now—which, I confess, I wonder at myself—may appear at the latter end of an ode which I made when I was but thirteen years old, and which was then printed, with many other verses. The beginning of it is boyish; but of this part which I here set down, if a very little were corrected, I should hardly now be much ashamed.

This only grant me, that my means may lie

Too low for envy, for contempt too high.

Some honour I would have,
Not from great deeds, but good alone;
Th' unknown are better than ill-known.

Rumour can ope the grave;
Acquaintance I would have; but when 't depends

Not on the number, but the choice of friends.

Books should, not business, entertain the light,

And sleep, as undisturbed as death, the night.

My house a cottage, more
Than palace, and should fitting be
For all my use, no luxury.

My garden painted o'er
With Nature's hand, not Art's; and pleasures yield,

Horace might envy in his Sabine field.¹

¹*Horace might envy in his Sabine field.* Quintus Horatius Flaccus (65–8 B.C.) was Rome's greatest lyric poet. He wrote much of his beloved farm in the Sabine hills near Rome.

²*Spenser's works.* Edmund Spenser (1552–1599) is sometimes called the “poet's poet” because of the formal perfection of his verse. His most famous work, *The Faerie Queene*, contains the knights, giants, etc., mentioned by Cowley.

Thus would I double my life's fading space,
For he that runs it well, twice runs his race.

And in this true delight,
These unbought sports, that happy state,
I would not fear nor wish my fate,

But boldly say each night,
To-morrow let my sun his beams display,
Or in clouds hide them; I have lived to-day.

You may see by it I was even then acquainted with the poets, for the conclusion is taken out of Horace; and perhaps it was the immature and immoderate love of them which stamped first, or rather engraved, the characters in me. They were like letters cut in the bark of a young tree, which, with the tree, still grow proportionably. But how this love came to be produced in me so early, is a hard question: I believe I can tell the particular little chance that filled my head first with such chimes of verse, as have never since left ringing there: for I remember when I began to read, and take some pleasure in it, there was wont to lie in my mother's parlour—I know not by what accident, for she herself never in her life read any book but of devotion—but there was wont to lie Spenser's works;² this I happened to fall upon, and was infinitely delighted with the stories of the knights, and giants, and monsters, and brave houses, which I found everywhere there—though my understanding had little to do with all this—and by degrees, with the tinkling of the rhyme, and dance of the numbers; so that I think I had

read him all over before I was twelve years old. With these affections of mind, and my heart wholly set upon letters, I went to the university; but was soon torn from thence by that public violent storm, which would suffer nothing to stand where it did, but rooted up every plant, even from the princely cedars, to me, the hyssop.³ Yet I had as good fortune as could have befallen me in such a tempest; for I was cast by it into the family of one of the best persons, and into the court of one of the best princesses in the world. Now, though I was here engaged in ways most contrary to the original design of my life; that is, into much company, and no small business, and into a daily sight of greatness, both militant and triumphant—for that was the state then of the English and the French courts—yet all this was so far from altering my opinion, that it only added the confirmation of reason to that which was before but natural inclination. I saw plainly all the paint of that kind of life, the nearer I came to it; and that beauty which I did not fall in love with, when, for aught I knew, it was real, was not like to bewitch or entice me when I saw it was adulterate. I met with several great persons, whom I liked very well, but could not perceive that any part of their greatness was to be liked or desired, no more than I would be glad or content to be in a storm, though I saw many ships which rid safely and bravely in it. A storm would not agree with my

stomach, if it did with my courage; though I was in a crowd of as good company as could be found anywhere, though I was in business of great and honourable trust, though I eat at the best table, and enjoyed the best conveniences for present subsistence that ought to be desired by a man of my condition, in banishment and public distresses; yet I could not abstain from renewing my old school-boy's wish, in a copy of verses to the same effect:

Well, then, I now do plainly see
This busy world and I shall ne'er agree,
etc.

And I never then proposed to myself any other advantage from his Majesty's happy restoration, but the getting into some moderately convenient retreat in the country, which I thought in that case I might easily have compassed, as well as some others, who, with no greater probabilities or pretences, have arrived to extraordinary fortunes. But I had before written a shrewd prophecy against myself, and I think Apollo inspired me in the truth, though not in the elegance of it—

Thou neither great at court, nor in the
war,
Nor at the Exchange shalt be, nor at the
wrangling bar;
Content thyself with the small barren
praise
Which thy neglected verse does raise,
etc.

³*hyssop*. The mint plant. Cowley is comparing himself to a very small plant in contrast to the mighty cedar which symbolizes the king.

However, by the failing of the forces which I had expected, I did not quit the design which I had resolved on; I cast myself into a *corpus perditum*,⁴ without making capitulations, or taking counsel of fortune. But God laughs at man, who says to his soul, Take thy ease: I met presently not only with many little incumbrances and impediments, but with so much sickness—a new misfortune to me—as would have spoiled

the happiness of an emperor as well as mine. Yet I do neither repent nor alter my course; *Non ego perfidem dixi sacramentum*.⁵ Nothing shall separate me from a mistress which I have loved so long, and have now at last married; though she neither has brought me a rich portion, nor lived yet so quietly with me as I hoped from her.

Nor by me e'er shall you,
You of all names the sweetest and the
best,
You muses, books, and liberty, and rest;
You gardens, fields, and woods forsaken
be,
As long as life itself forsake not me.

⁴*corpus perditum*. An abandoned life.

⁵*Non ego perfidem dixi sacramentum*. I have not taken a false oath.

Discussion

1. What keeps Cowley's essay from sounding conceited?
2. Explain the first two lines of the poem Cowley wrote when he was thirteen.
3. What is the point Cowley says he got from Horace?
4. What was Cowley's feeling about life at a royal court? Mention both the aspects he liked and those he disliked.
5. What does Cowley think of the life of a poet after he has achieved it?

Research

1. Look up some of Cowley's poetry. What is your opinion of it? If you find a poem that appeals to you, share it with your classmates.
2. If you are interested in history, you might see what you can find out about the defeat and execution of Charles I and the restoration of the throne with his son, Charles II. What can you find out about the queen, whom Cowley served? Plan a brief oral report.

The SPECTATOR.

*Non fumum ex fulgore, sed ex fumo dare lucem
Cogitat, ut speciosa dehinc miracula promat.* Hor.

To be Continued every Day.

Thursday, March 1. 1711.

One of the most famous periodicals of English literature is *The Spectator*, published in London early in the eighteenth century by Richard Steele and Joseph Addison. If the two men did not invent the periodical essay, they brought it to a perfection that has been much imitated ever since.

The Spectator first appeared on March 1, 1711, and continued on every weekday until December 6, 1712. In the last six months of 1714 it was revived by Addison for eighty more issues. There were in all 635 essays published in *The Spectator*.

The first essay was written by Addison and titled "The Spectator Himself." The second essay, published the next day, was written by Steele. It introduced the imaginary characters belonging to "The Spectator's Club." Although Addison and Steele wrote most of the essays, others contributed occasionally, among them Eustace Budgell, a cousin of Addison's. Addison's contributions to *The Spectator* were signed C, L, I, or O, from Clio, the Greek muse of history. Steele's signature was R or T.

Throughout the series the imaginary author is the Spectator. Although his characterization makes him seem more like Addison than Steele, it would be a mistake to consider the essays autobiographical. The Club members were middle-class people, moving in the

same social circle as their creators. The character that was to prove most popular and most enduring was Sir Roger de Coverley. He was Steele's invention, appearing as the first of the six characters described in "The Spectator's Club." Sir Roger appeared in many later essays, most of them written by Addison. Steele wrote six Sir Roger essays and Budgell, one.

While Addison and Steele were equally at home in ridiculing manners and taste, it was Addison who wrote the essays devoted to literary criticism. He also wrote the philosophical, semi-religious essays which often appeared on Saturdays. While Addison's essays are more profound in thought and a little more polished in style, the essays of the two men are often indistinguishable. This is especially true in the essays where conversation predominates. While critics are inclined to give Addison more credit than Steele, it is probably more fair to say that the two writers complemented each other.

In its day *The Spectator* had considerable influence of a wholesome nature on public opinion. It also gave a strong impetus to the development of periodical literature. The Sir Roger papers, with their characterization, conversation, and beginnings of plot, are generally held to be one of the traceable ancestors of the English novel.

LIKE his famous creation, the *Spectator*, Joseph Addison was a quiet, retiring man, who enjoyed sitting in coffee-houses listening to others talk. He was, again like the *Spectator*, a tolerant but keen observer. Beyond this it is of doubtful value to try to correlate the lives of the real and the imaginary writer.

Joseph Addison was born at Milston, near Salisbury, the son of a clergyman. He was sent to Charter House School in London, and it was there he met Dick Steele, who was later to play so important a role in his literary career.

Addison attended Oxford University, and after receiving his degree taught there for a number of years. Becoming interested in politics, he went on a four-year tour of Europe to learn languages and to familiarize himself with world affairs. Upon his return he entered actively into public life, and in 1708 he was elected to Parliament. In the next ten years he filled various posts of increasing importance, including that of Secretary of State.

In his spare time Addison wrote poetry, plays, and essays. From 1709 to 1711 he contributed essays to Steele's *Tatler*. Then from 1711 to 1713 came his joint publishing venture with Steele, *The Spectator*. Addison's most famous poem was "The Campaign," which celebrated Marlborough's victory at Blenheim. He wrote, too, the still popular hymn beginning "The spacious firmament on high." Although he was rated highly in his own day as a poet and playwright, it is his essays that have won him lasting fame. The prose in his essays is so excellent that the modern editor can find little he would want to change or omit.

Addison invented the three chief characters in the Sir Roger de Coverley Papers, which appeared from time to time in *The Spectator*. Sir Roger himself is among the immortal literary creations which include Falstaff, Tom Jones, Becky Sharpe, and Mr. Pickwick. Because of his creation of living characters and because of the thin thread of plot that runs through his essays, Addison is generally considered one of the foreshadowers of the English novel.

Addison was gentle in his satire. His criticism was always cheerful and interesting, never dogmatic or harsh. His wit was always clean. The French critic Taine once wrote of Addison, "It is no small thing to make morality fashionable. Addison did it, and it remained in fashion."

Late in life Addison married the Countess of Warwick, whom he had known for many years. When he died three years later, he was buried in Westminster Abbey.



The Spectator Himself



Non fumum ex fulgore, sed ex fumo dare
lucem
Cogitat, ut speciosa dehinc miracula
promat.¹

—Horace.

I have observed that a reader seldom peruses a book with pleasure till he knows whether the writer of it be a black or fair man, of a mild or choleric disposition, married or a bachelor, with other particulars of the like nature, that conduce very much to the right understanding of an author. To gratify this curiosity, which is so natural to a reader, I design this paper and my next as prefatory discourses to my following writings, and shall give some account in them of the several persons that are engaged in this work. As the chief trouble of compiling, digesting, and correcting will fall to my share, I must do myself the justice to open the work with my own history.

I was born to a small hereditary

estate, which, according to the tradition of the village where it lies, was bounded by the same hedges and ditches in William the Conqueror's time that it is at present, and has been delivered down from father to son whole and entire, without the loss or acquisition of a single field or meadow, during the space of six hundred years. There runs a story in the family that my mother dreamed that she was brought to bed of a judge. Whether this might proceed from a lawsuit which was then depending in the family, or my father's being a justice of the peace, I cannot determine; for I am

¹*Non . . . promat.* "His thought is not to give flame first and then smoke, but from smoke to let light break out so that he may therefrom bring forth believable wonders."

not so vain as to think it presaged any dignity that I should arrive at in my future life, though that was the interpretation which the neighborhood put upon it. The gravity of my behavior at my very first appearance in the world seemed to favor my mother's dream; for, as she has often told me, I threw away my rattle before I was two months old, and would not make use of my coral² until they had taken away the bells from it.

As for the rest of my infancy, there being nothing in it remarkable, I shall pass it over in silence. I find that during my nonage I had the reputation of a very sullen youth, but was always a favorite with my schoolmaster, who used to say that my parts were solid, and would wear well. I had not been long at the University before I distinguished myself by a most profound silence; for during the space of eight years, excepting in the public exercises of the college, I scarce uttered the quantity of a hundred words, and indeed do not remember that I ever spoke three sentences together in my whole life. Whilst I was in this learned body, I applied myself with so much diligence to my studies that there are very few celebrated books, either in the learned or the modern

tongues, which I am not acquainted with.

Upon the death of my father, I was resolved to travel into foreign countries, and therefore left the University with the character of an odd, unaccountable fellow that had a great deal of learning, if I would but show it. An insatiable thirst after knowledge carried me into all the countries of Europe in which there was anything new or strange to be seen; nay, to such a degree was my curiosity raised that, having read the controversies of some great men concerning the antiquities of Egypt, I made a voyage to Grand Cairo on purpose to take the measure of a pyramid; and as soon as I had set myself right in that particular, returned to my native country with great satisfaction.

I have passed my latter years in this city, where I am frequently seen in most public places, though there are not above half a dozen of my select friends that know me; of whom my next paper shall give a more particular account. There is no place of general resort wherein I do not often make my appearance; sometimes I am seen thrusting my head into a round of politicians at Will's,³ and listening with great attention to the narratives that are made in those little circular audiences. Sometimes I smoke a pipe at Child's,⁴ and while I seem attentive to nothing but the *Postman*,⁵ overhear the conversation of every table in the room. I appear on

²*coral*. A toy of polished coral was often given to teething infants.

³*Will's*. A coffee-house that was the meeting place of wits and writers.

⁴*Child's*. Clergymen often met here.

⁵*Postman*. A newspaper of the time.



artisan, without ever meddling with any practical part in life. I am very well versed in the theory of a husband or a father, and can discern the errors in the economy, business, and diversion of others better than those who are engaged in them—as standers-by discover blots^s which are apt to escape those who are in the game. I never espoused any party with violence, and am resolved to observe an exact neutrality between the Whigs and Tories unless I shall be forced to declare myself by the hostilities of either side. In short, I have acted in all the parts of my life as a looker-on, which is the character I intend to preserve in this paper.

I have given the reader just so much of my history and character as to let him see I am not altogether unqualified for the business I have undertaken. As for other particulars in my life and adventures, I shall insert them in following papers as I shall see occasion. In the meantime, when I consider how much I have seen, read, and heard, I begin to blame my own taciturnity; and since I have neither time nor inclination to communicate the fullness of my heart in speech, I am resolved to do it in writing, and

^s*St. James's Coffee-house.* The Whigs, the liberal party in politics, met here. The conservative Tories met at the Cocoa-Tree.

^t*Drury Lane and Haymarket.* Streets in the theatrical district. Theaters by these names are still in existence.

^s*blots.* An exposed piece liable to be taken. The term is from backgammon.

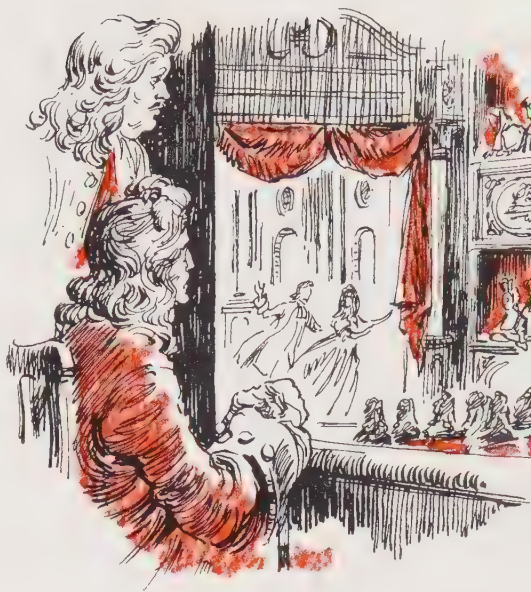
Sunday nights at St. James's Coffee-house,⁶ and sometimes join the little committee of politics in the inner-room, as one who comes there to hear and improve. My face is likewise very well known at the Grecian, the Cocoa-Tree, and in the theaters, both of Drury Lane and the Haymarket.⁷ I have been taken for a merchant upon the Exchange for above these ten years, and sometimes pass for a Jew in the assembly of stock-jobbers at Jonathan's. In short, wherever I see a cluster of people, I always mix with them, though I never open my lips but in my own club.

Thus I live in the world rather as a Spectator of mankind than as one of the species, by which means I have made myself a speculative statesman, soldier, merchant, and

to print myself out,⁹ if possible, before I die. I have been often told by my friends that it is a pity so many useful discoveries which I have made should be in the possession of a silent man. For this reason, therefore, I shall publish a sheetful of thoughts every morning for the benefit of my contemporaries; and if I can any way contribute to the diversion or improvement of the country in which I live, I shall leave it, when I am summoned out of it, with the secret satisfaction of thinking that I have not lived in vain.

There are three very material points which I have not spoken on in this paper, and which, for several important reasons, I must keep to myself, at least for some time—I mean an account of my name, my age, and my lodgings. I must confess I would gratify my reader in anything that is reasonable; but as for these three particulars, though I am sensible they might tend very much to the embellishment of my paper, I cannot yet come to a resolution of communicating them to the public. They would indeed draw me out of that obscurity which I have enjoyed for many years, and expose me in public places to several salutes and civilities which have been always very disagreeable to me; for the greatest pain I can suffer is the being talked to and being

print myself out. To give a complete account of myself.



stared at. It is for this reason, likewise, that I keep my complexion and dress as very great secrets, though it is not impossible but I may make discoveries of both in the progress of the work I have undertaken.



After having been thus particular upon myself, I shall in tomorrow's paper give an account of those gentlemen who are concerned with me in this work. For, as I have before intimated, a plan of it is laid and concerted—as all other matters of importance are—in a club. However, as my friends have engaged me to stand in the front, those who have a mind to correspond with me may direct their letters to the Spec-

tator, at Mr. Buckley's in Little Britain.¹⁰ For I must further acquaint the reader that though our club meets only on Tuesdays and Thursdays, we have appointed a committee to sit every night for the inspection of all such papers as may contribute to the advancement of the public weal. C.

¹⁰Mr. Buckley's in Little Britain. The name and address are those of the publisher of *The Spectator*.

Discussion

1. What reason does Addison give for beginning *The Spectator* series with an account of his imaginary self?
2. What sort of person does he represent himself as being?
3. How does Addison make it clear that he plans to be a spectator rather than a partisan?
4. What two purposes does he set for himself? Does he achieve either in his first essay?
5. The satire is gentle and subtle; nevertheless, it is conspicuously present. Point out as many examples as you can.

Research

1. This essay is just an introduction to Addison, as it is to *The Spectator*. Read as many more of the essays as you can find time for.
2. Benjamin Franklin sought to improve his literary style by imitating *The Spectator* essays. See how well you can do this by relating some observations around school as you think Addison would write them.
3. If your library can supply sufficient information on eighteenth-century London, you can make a real contribution to the class with an oral report on the famous city as it was in Addison's day. Look for pictures of at least some of the places Addison mentions.

RICHARD STEELE was born in Dublin, the son of a lawyer. His father died while he was a small boy, but an uncle sent him to school at Charterhouse in London, and it was here Dick Steele and Joseph Addison became acquainted. Already Steele had the engaging personality that was to win him friends all his life. The two boys went on to Oxford together, but Steele left before he got his degree, to enlist in the army. He spent six years as a soldier and rose to a captaincy. All his life he was proud of his army service and liked to be called Captain Steele.

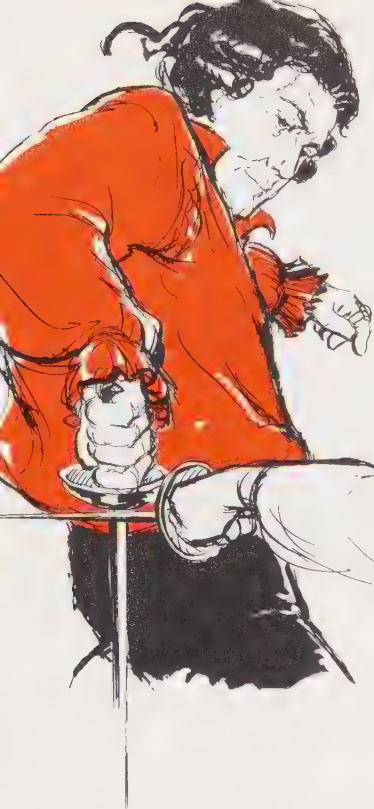
The military career was followed by a period as propagandist for the Whig party. Like Addison, Steele was elected to Parliament and held various government offices. Besides engaging in politics, he wrote plays, among them *The Funeral*, *The Lying Lover*, *The Tender Husband*, and his most popular play, *The Conscious Lovers*. Their titles notwithstanding, the plays were comedies with a strong moralizing tone.

In 1709 Steele started a small periodical, *The Tatler*, which became the forerunner of the more famous *Spectator*, and may indeed be thought of as a forerunner of the modern magazine. *The Tatler* appeared three times a week. Each issue consisted of several letters dated from the different coffee-houses or from Steele's apartment. Much of the content was social and political gossip, the latter naturally colored by Steele's Whig views. Steele edited *The Tatler* under the name of Isaac Bickerstaff, but by the sixth issue Addison had guessed his friend's secret. A few weeks later Addison began to write for *The Tatler*. In all he contributed forty-two of the 271 essays that appeared before *The Tatler* was discontinued, probably for political reasons.

Two months later Steele and Addison began a new periodical, *The Spectator*, which was to take no sides in politics. In the new venture Steele was the originator, but it was Addison who turned out the best essays. It was Steele, for instance, who conceived the character of Sir Roger de Coverley, but it was Addison who brought the character fully to life. Although Steele's prose was never as polished as Addison's, his essays reveal a natural liveliness, keen wit, and an inventive imagination. *The Spectator* lasted not quite two years.

A number of periodicals of less lasting interest followed *The Spectator*, among them the *Guardian*, the *Plebeian*, and the *Theatre*. Active in politics, Steele was knighted in 1715.





The Spectator's Club

—Ast alii sex,
Et plures uno conclamant ore.¹
—Juvenal.

The first of our society is a gentleman of Worcestershire, of ancient descent, a baronet, his name Sir Roger de Coverley. His great-grandfather was inventor of that famous country-dance² which is called after him. All who know that shire are very well acquainted with the parts and merits of Sir Roger. He is a gentleman that is very singular in his behavior, but his singularities proceed from his good sense and are contradictions to the manners of the world only as he thinks the world is in the wrong. However, this humor creates him no enemies, for he does nothing with sourness or obstinacy; and his being unconfined to modes and forms makes him but the readier and more

capable to please and oblige all who know him. When he is in town, he lives in Soho Square.³ It is said he keeps himself a bachelor by reason he was crossed in love by a perverse, beautiful widow of the next county to him. Before this disappointment Sir Roger was what you call a fine gentleman, had often supped with my Lord Rochester and Sir George Etherege,⁴ fought a duel upon his first coming to town, and kicked Bully Dawson⁵ in a public coffee-

¹—Ast . . . ore. "But six others and more call out with one voice."

²country-dance. The "Sir Roger de Coverley" is similar to the Virginia Reel.

³Soho Square. This was a fashionable part of London in the eighteenth century. In the nineteenth century, Hazlitt and De Quincey were to live there.

⁴Lord Rochester and Sir George Etherege. Rochester was a popular poet and Etherege a popular playwright of the Restoration period.

⁵Dawson. A notorious gambler.

house for calling him "youngster." But being ill-used by the above-mentioned widow, he was very serious for a year and a half; and though, his temper being naturally jovial, he at last got over it, he grew careless of himself, and never dressed afterwards. He continues to wear a coat and doublet of the same cut that were in fashion at the time of his repulse, which, in his merry humors, he tells us, has been in and out twelve times since he first wore it. He is now in his fifty-sixth year, cheerful, gay, and hearty; keeps a good house both in town and country; a great lover of mankind; but there is such a mirthful cast in his behavior that he is rather beloved than esteemed. His tenants grow rich, his servants look satisfied, all the young women profess love to him, and the young men are glad of his company. When he comes into a house, he calls the servants by their names, and talks all the way upstairs to a visit. I must not omit that Sir Roger is a justice of the quorum;⁶ that he fills the chair at a quarter-session with great abilities; and three months ago gained universal applause by explaining a passage in the Game Act.⁷

The gentleman next in esteem and

⁶*justice of the quorum.* Justices of the Peace presided over criminal courts which met quarterly. Justices chosen to sit with the next highest court, which met twice a year, were called justices of the quorum.

⁷*Game Act.* The laws governing hunting were very complex.

⁸*Inner Temple.* One of the four Colleges of Law in London.

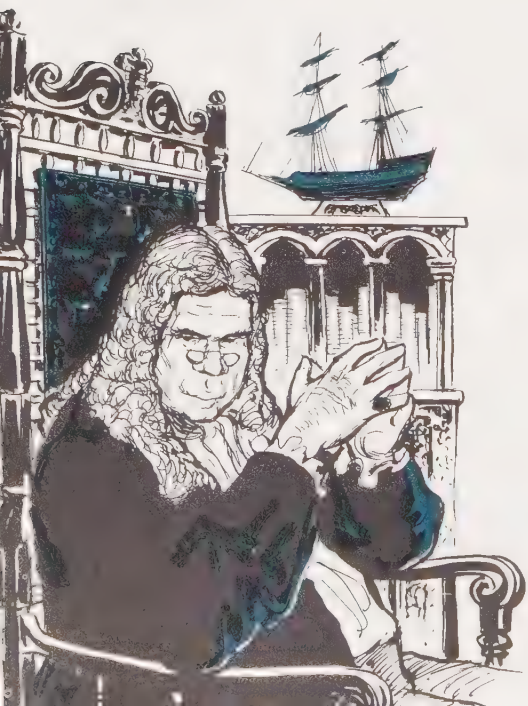


authority among us is another bachelor, who is a member of the Inner Temple,⁸ a man of great probity, wit, and understanding; but he has chosen his place of residence rather to obey the direction of an old humorsome father than in pursuit of his own inclinations. He was placed there to study the laws of

the land, and is the most learned of any of the house in those of the stage. Aristotle and Longinus⁹ are much better understood by him than Littleton or Coke. The father sends up, every post, questions relating to marriage-articles, leases, and tenures, in the neighborhood; all which questions he agrees with an attorney to answer and take care of in the lump. He is studying the passions themselves, when he should be inquiring into the debates among men which arise from them. He knows the argument of each of the orations of Demosthenes and Tully,¹⁰ but not one case in the reports of our own courts. No one ever took him for a fool, but none, except his intimate friends, know he has a great deal of wit. This turn makes him at once both disinterested and agreeable. As few of his thoughts are drawn from business,

they are most of them fit for conversation. His taste of books is a little too just for the age he lives in; he has read all, but approves of very few. His familiarity with the customs, manners, actions, and writings of the ancients makes him a very delicate observer of what occurs to him in the present world. He is an excellent critic, and the time of the play is his hour of business; exactly at five he passes through New Inn,¹¹ crosses through Russell Court, and takes a turn at Will's till the play begins; he has his shoes rubbed and his periwig powdered at the barber's as you go into the Rose.¹² It is for the good of the audience when he is at a play, for the actors have an ambition to please him.

The person of next consideration is Sir Andrew Freeport, a merchant of great eminence in the city of London, a person of indefatigable industry, strong reason, and great experience. His notions of trade are noble and generous, and, as every rich man has usually some sly way of jesting which would make no great figure were he not a rich man, he calls the sea the British Common. He is acquainted with commerce in all its

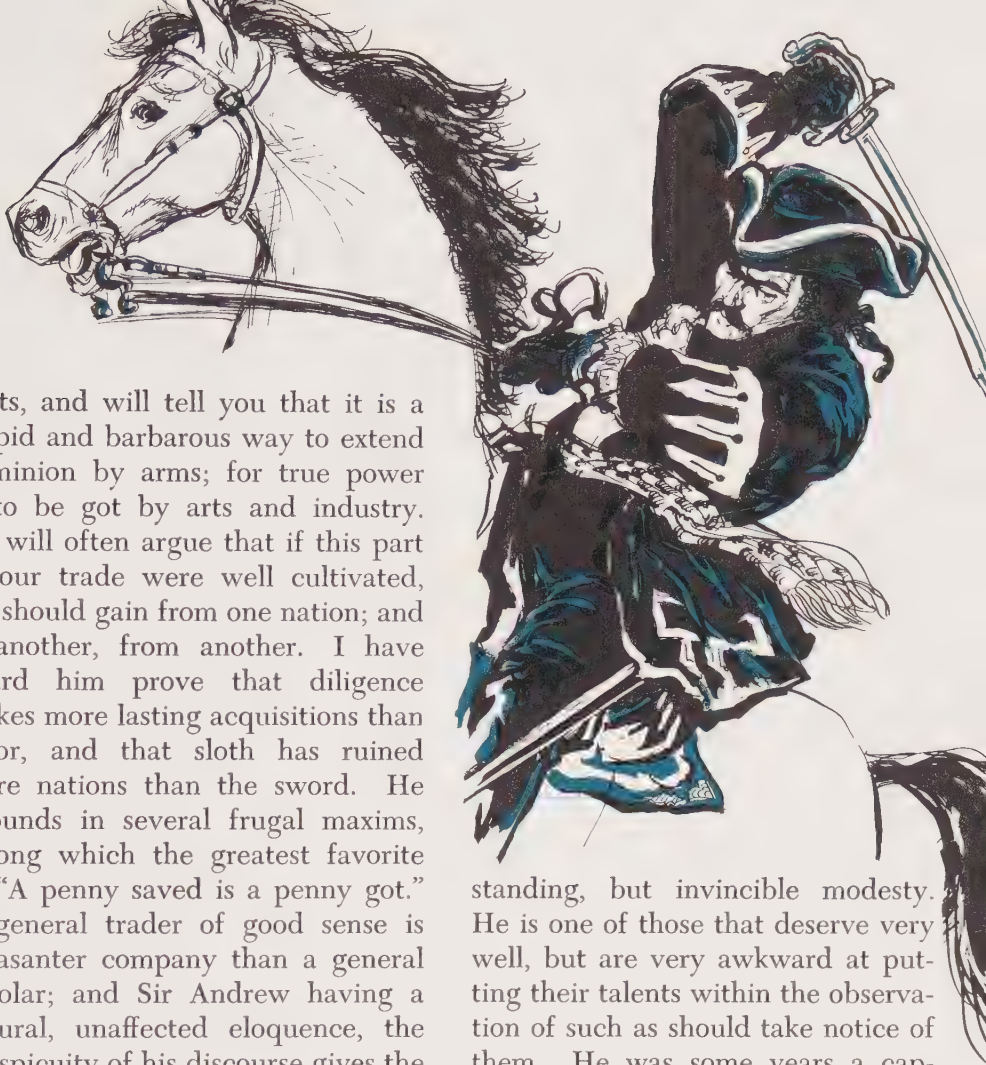


⁹*Aristotle and Longinus.* Both of these Greek philosophers wrote books on literary criticism. Littleton and Coke were authorities on English law.

¹⁰*Demosthenes and Tully.* Demosthenes was a famous Greek orator and Marcus Tullius Cicero was a famous Roman orator.

¹¹*New Inn.* Another of the Law Colleges.

¹²*Rose.* This tavern of rather low repute was located near the Drury Lane Theatre.



parts, and will tell you that it is a stupid and barbarous way to extend dominion by arms; for true power is to be got by arts and industry. He will often argue that if this part of our trade were well cultivated, we should gain from one nation; and if another, from another. I have heard him prove that diligence makes more lasting acquisitions than valor, and that sloth has ruined more nations than the sword. He abounds in several frugal maxims, among which the greatest favorite is, "A penny saved is a penny got." A general trader of good sense is pleasanter company than a general scholar; and Sir Andrew having a natural, unaffected eloquence, the perspicuity of his discourse gives the same pleasure that wit would in another man. He has made his fortunes himself, and says that England may be richer than other kingdoms by as plain methods as he himself is richer than other men; though at the same time I can say this of him, that there is not a point in the compass but blows home a ship in which he is an owner.

Next to Sir Andrew in the club-room sits Captain Sentry, a gentleman of great courage, good under-

standing, but invincible modesty. He is one of those that deserve very well, but are very awkward at putting their talents within the observation of such as should take notice of them. He was some years a captain, and behaved himself with great gallantry in several engagements and at several sieges; but having a small estate of his own, and being next heir to Sir Roger, he has quitted a way of life in which no man can rise suitably to his merit who is not something of a courtier as well as a soldier. I have heard him often lament that in a profession where merit is placed in so conspicuous a view, impudence should get the better of modesty. When he has talked

to this purpose I never heard him make a sour expression, but frankly confess that he left the world because he was not fit for it. A strict honesty and an even, regular behavior are in themselves obstacles to him that must press through crowds who endeavor at the same end with himself—the favor of a commander. He will, however, in this way of talk, excuse generals for not disposing according to men's desert, or inquiring into it. "For," says he, "that great man who has a mind to help me has as many to break through to come at me as I have to come at him." Therefore he will conclude that the man who would make a figure, especially in a military way, must get over all false modesty, and assist his patron against the importunity of other pretenders by a proper assurance in his own vindication. He says it is a civil cowardice to be backward in asserting what you ought to expect, as it is a military fear to be slow in attacking when it is your duty. With this candor does the gentleman speak of himself and others. The same frankness runs through all his conversation. The military part of his life has furnished him with many adventures, in the relation of which he is very agreeable to the company; for he is never overbearing, though accustomed to command men in the utmost degree below him; nor ever too obsequious from an habit of obeying men highly above him.



But that our society may not appear a set of humorists,¹³ unacquainted with the gallantries and pleasures of the age, we have among us the gallant Will Honeycomb, a gentleman who according to his years should be in the decline of his life, but having ever been very careful of his person, and always had a very easy fortune, time has made but very little impression either by wrinkles on his forehead or traces in his brain. His person is well turned, of a good height. He is very ready at that sort of discourse with which men usually entertain women. He has all his life dressed very well, and remembers habits¹⁴ as others do men. He can smile when one speaks to him, and laughs

¹³humorists. Odd characters.

¹⁴habits. Costumes.

easily. He knows the history of every mode and can inform you from which of the French king's wenches our wives and daughters had this manner of curling their hair, that way of placing their hoods; whose frailty was covered by such a sort of petticoat, and whose vanity to show her foot made that part of the dress so short in such a year. In a word, all his conversation and knowledge has been in the female world. As other men of his age will take notice to you what such a minister said upon such and such an occasion, he will tell you when the Duke of Monmouth¹⁵ danced at court such a woman was then smitten, another was taken with him at the head of his troop in the Park.¹⁶ In all these important relations, he has ever about the same time received a kind glance or a blow of a fan from some celebrated beauty, mother of the present Lord Such-a-one. If you speak of a young commoner that said a lively thing in the House, he starts up: "He has good blood in his veins. Tom Mirabell begot him; the rogue cheated me in that affair. That young fellow's mother used me more like a dog than any woman I ever made advances to." This way of talking of his very

much enlivens the conversation among us of a more sedate turn; and I find there is not one of the company but myself, who rarely speak at all, but speaks of him as of that sort of man who is usually called a well-bred, fine gentleman. To conclude his character, where women are not concerned, he is an honest, worthy man.

I cannot tell whether I am to account him whom I am next to speak of as one of our company, for he visits us but seldom; but when he does, it adds to every man else a new enjoyment of himself. He is a clergyman, a very philosophic man, of general learning, great sanctity of life, and the most exact good breeding. He has the misfortune to be of a very weak constitution, and consequently cannot accept of such cares and business as preferences in his functions would oblige him to. He is therefore among divines what a chamber-counselor¹⁷

¹⁵*Duke of Monmouth.* The son of Charles II, he commanded English troops upon several expeditions.

¹⁶*Park.* Hyde Park is a large open area near the royal palaces.

¹⁷*chamber-counselor.* A lawyer who will give advice in his office but will not take cases to court.



is among lawyers. The probity of his mind and the integrity of his life create him followers, as being eloquent or loud advances others. He seldom introduces the subject he speaks upon; but we are so far gone in years that he observes, when he is among us, an earnestness to have

him fall on some divine topic, which he always treats with much authority, as one who has no interests in this world, as one who is hastening to the object of all his wishes, and conceives hope from his decays and infirmities. These are my ordinary companions. R.

Discussion

1. Characterize briefly each of the members of the Club.
2. Which person is treated most unkindly in the essay? Point out sentences which support your opinion.
3. What exactly does Steele mean in saying Sir Roger is "rather beloved than esteemed"?
4. Of whom was it said, "As few of his thoughts are drawn from business, they are most of them fit for conversation"? Do you think Steele is being satirical?
5. What has kept Captain Sentry from getting ahead in the world? Do you believe there really are people like Captain Sentry?

Research

1. Having read Steele's description of Sir Roger, you will find it interesting to read one of Addison's accounts of him, perhaps "Sir Roger at Church." Had Addison changed Sir Roger's character in any way, or has he developed him along the lines laid down by Steele?
2. If any one of the characters appeals especially to you, it would be simple to locate the essays in which he figures prominently. You could write a short biography of the character, or you could plan an oral report in which you emphasize his attitude toward life.
3. If you have read Sinclair Lewis' *Babbitt* recently, or have time to read it now, you could make an interesting report on the similarities between Babbitt and Sir Andrew Freeport.

CHARLES LAMB was born in London, a city he grew to love and in which he spent all of his life. His parents were poor, and Charles' education was obtained in a charity school, Christ's Hospital School, which he attended from his eighth through his fifteenth year. A classmate who became Lamb's lifelong friend was the future poet, Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Charles hoped for a university scholarship but was rejected because of an impediment in his speech. Instead he went to work as a clerk at the South Sea House. Afterwards he became a bookkeeper for the East India Company, where he stayed until he was retired on a pension after thirty-three years of service.

The course of Lamb's personal life was determined by a tragedy which occurred when he was twenty-one. His sister Mary, in a fit of temporary insanity, stabbed and killed their mother. To save Mary from permanent commitment to an asylum, Lamb assumed her guardianship. Except for brief spells when he had to take his sister to the asylum, Lamb cared for her at home the rest of his life. In her normal state Mary was a cheerful and intelligent woman. The brother and sister collaborated on a number of books for children, among them *Tales from Shakespeare*, published in 1807. Charles wrote the stories of the tragedies and Mary wrote those of the comedies. Lamb was a good conversationalist, and many of the leading literary persons of his day spent enjoyable evenings with the Lambs.

From time to time Lamb wrote the essays on which his fame rests. Originally magazine pieces, they were later collected in two volumes, *Essays of Elia*, published in 1823, and *Last Essays of Elia*, published ten years later. Elia was the name which Lamb had signed to his first essays, borrowing it from a fellow-worker named Ellia. In time Elia became so real to Lamb's readers that they would have rebelled had he wanted to drop the name.

"A Dissertation upon Roast Pig" grew out of a legend repeated to Lamb by his old friend Thomas Manning, who had visited China. The essay first appeared in the *London Magazine* in September, 1822, and Lamb's rhapsody prompted many readers to send him gifts of young pigs. The essay was later included in *Essays of Elia*. Much of the humor in this, as in Lamb's other essays, is due to his highly individual choice of words. You will note, for instance, that the humble abode of Ho-ti, which could be rebuilt in an hour or two, is described successively as a cottage, a mansion, and a tenement.



1775-1834

CHARLES LAMB

A Dissertation upon Roast Pig



Mankind, says a Chinese manuscript, which my friend M. was obliging enough to read and explain to me, for the first seventy thousand ages ate their meat raw, clawing or biting it from the living animal, just as they do in Abyssinia to this day. This period is not obscurely hinted at by their great Confucius in the second chapter of his *Mundane Mutations*,¹ where he designates a kind of golden age by the term Chofang, literally the Cooks' Holiday. The manuscript goes on to say, that the art of roasting, or rather broiling (which I take to be the elder-brother) was accidentally discovered in the manner following.

The swineherd, Ho-ti, having gone out into the woods one morning, as his manner was, to collect mast for his hogs, left his cottage in

the care of his eldest son, Bo-bo, a great lubberly boy, who being fond of playing with fire, as youngers of his age commonly are, let some sparks escape into a bundle of straw which, kindling quickly, spread the conflagration over every part of their poor mansion, till it was reduced to ashes. Together with the cottage (a sorry ante-diluvian make-shift of a building, you may think it), what was of much more importance, a fine litter of new-farrowed pigs, no less than nine in number, perished. China pigs have been esteemed a luxury all over the east, from the remotest periods that we read of. Bo-bo was in the utmost consternation, as you may think, not so much

¹*Mundane Mutations*. This title, as well as the manuscript, is an invention of Lamb's.

for the sake of the tenement, which his father and he could easily build up again with a few dry branches, and the labor of an hour or two, at any time, as for the loss of the pigs.

While he was thinking what he should say to his father, and wringing his hands over the smoking remnants of one of those untimely sufferers, an odor assailed his nostrils, unlike any scent which he had before experienced. What could it proceed from?—not from the burnt cottage—he had smelt that smell before—indeed this was by no means the first accident of the kind which had occurred through the negligence of this unlucky young fire-brand. Much less did it resemble that of any known herb, weed, or flower. A premonitory moistening at the same time overflowed his nether lip. He knew not what to think. He next stooped down to feel the pig, if there were any signs of life in it. He burnt his fingers, and to cool them he applied them in his booby fashion to his mouth. Some of the crumbs of the scorched skin had come away with his fingers, and for the first time in his life (in the world's life indeed, for before him no man had known it) he tasted—*crackling!*

Again he felt and fumbled at the pig. It did not burn him so much now; still he licked his fingers from a sort of habit. The truth at length broke into his slow understanding, that it was the pig that smelt so, and the pig that tasted so delicious; and,



surrendering himself up to the new-born pleasure, he fell to tearing up whole handfuls of the scorched skin with the flesh next it, and was cramming it down his throat in his beastly fashion, when his sire entered amid the smoking rafters, armed with retributory cudgel, and finding how affairs stood, began to rain blows upon the young rogue's shoulders, as thick as hailstones, which Bo-bo heeded not any more than if they had been flies. The tickling pleasure, which he experienced in his lower regions, had rendered him quite callous to any inconveniences he might feel in those remote quarters. His father might lay on, but he could not beat him from his pig, till he had fairly made an end of it, when, becoming a little more sensible of his situation, something like the following dialogue ensued.

"You graceless whelp, what have you got there devouring? Is it not enough that you have burnt me down three houses with your dog's tricks, and be hanged to you, but you must be eating fire, and I know

not what—what have you got there, I say?"

"O, father, the pig, the pig, do come and taste how nice the burnt pig eats."

The ears of Ho-ti tingled with horror. He cursed his son, and he cursed himself that ever he should beget a son that should eat burnt pig.

Bo-bo, whose scent was wonderfully sharpened since morning, soon raked out another pig, and fairly rending it asunder, thrust the lesser half by main force into the fists of Ho-ti, still shouting out, "Eat, eat, eat the burnt pig, father, only taste —O Lord,"—with such-like barbarous ejaculations, cramming all the while as if he would choke.

Ho-ti trembled in every joint while he grasped the abominable thing, wavering whether he should not put his son to death for an unnatural young monster, when the crackling scorching his fingers, as it had done his son's, and applying the same remedy to them, he in his turn tasted some of its flavor, which, make what sour mouths he would for a pretense, proved not altogether displeasing to him. In conclusion (for the manuscript here is a little tedious) both father and son fairly sat down to the mess, and never left till they had despatched all that remained of the litter.

Bo-bo was strictly enjoined not to let the secret escape, for the neighbors would certainly have stoned them for a couple of abomi-



nable wretches, who could think of improving upon the good meat which God had sent them. Nevertheless strange stories got about. It was observed that Ho-ti's cottage was burnt down now more frequently than ever. Nothing but fires from this time forward. Some would break out in broad day, others in the night-time. As often as the sow farrowed, so sure was the house of Ho-ti to be in a blaze; and Ho-ti himself, which was the more remarkable, instead of chastising his son, seemed to grow more indulgent to him than ever. At length they were watched, the terrible mystery discovered, and father and son summoned to take their trial at Peking, then an inconsiderable assize town. Evidence was given, the obnoxious food itself produced in court, and verdict about to be pronounced, when the foreman of the jury



begged that some of the burnt pig, of which the culprits stood accused, might be handed into the box. He handled it, and they all handled it; and burning their fingers, as Bo-bo and his father had done before them, and nature prompting to each of them the same remedy, against the face of all the facts, and the clearest charge which judge had ever given, —to the surprise of the whole court, townsfolk, strangers, reporters, and all present—without leaving the box, or any manner of consultation whatever, they brought in a simultaneous verdict of not guilty.

The judge, who was a shrewd fellow, winked at the manifest iniquity of the decision; and when the court was dismissed, went privily, and

²Locke. A famous English philosopher, John Locke (1632-1704) was also interested in experimental science.

bought up all the pigs that could be had for love or money. In a few days his Lordship's town-house was observed to be on fire. The thing took wing, and now there was nothing to be seen but fires in every direction. Fuel and pigs grew enormously dear all over the district. The insurance offices one and all shut up shop. People built slighter and slighter every day, until it was feared that the very science of architecture would in no long time be lost to the world. Thus this custom of firing houses continued, till in process of time, says my manuscript, a sage arose, like our Locke,² who made a discovery, that the flesh of swine, or indeed of any other animal, might be cooked (*burnt*, as they called it) without the necessity of consuming a whole house to dress it. Then first began the rude form of a gridiron. Roasting by the string, or spit, came in a century or two later, I forget in whose dynasty. By such slow degrees, concludes the manuscript, do the most useful, and seemingly the most obvious arts, make their way among mankind.

Without placing too implicit faith in the account above given, it must be agreed that if a worthy pretext for so dangerous an experiment as setting houses on fire (especially in these days) could be assigned in favor of any culinary object, that pretext and excuse might be found in ROAST PIG.

Of all the delicacies in the whole *mundus edibilis*, I will maintain it

to be the most delicate—*princeps obsoniorum*.³

I speak not of your grown porkers—things between pig and pork—those hobbledahoys—but a young and tender suckling—under a moon old—guiltless as yet of the sty—with no original speck of the *amor immunditiae*,⁴ the hereditary failing of the first parent, yet manifest—his voice as yet not broken, but something between a childish treble and a grumble—the mild forerunner, or *praeludium*,⁵ of a grunt.

He must be roasted. I am not ignorant that our ancestors ate them seethed, or boiled—but what a sacrifice of the exterior tegument!

There is no flavor comparable, I will contend, to that of the crisp, tawny, well-watched, not over-roasted, *crackling*, as it is well called—the very teeth are invited to their share of the pleasure at this banquet in overcoming the coy, brittle resistance—with the adhesive oleaginous—O call it not fat—but an indefinable sweetness growing up to it—the tender blossoming of fat—fat cropped in the bud—taken in the shoot—in the first innocence—the cream and quintessence of the child-pig's yet pure food—the lean, no lean, but a kind of animal manna—or, rather, fat and lean (if it must be so) so blended and running into each other that both together make but one ambrosian result, or common substance.

Behold him, while he is “doing”—it seemeth rather a refreshing

warmth, than a scorching heat, that he is so passive to. How equably he twirleth round the string! Now he is just done. To see the extreme sensibility of that tender age, he hath wept out his pretty eyes—radiant jellies—shooting stars—

See him in the dish, his second cradle, how meek he lieth! Wouldst thou have had this innocent grow up to the grossness and indocility which too often accompany maturer swinehood? Ten to one he would have proved a glutton, a sloven, an obstinate, disagreeable animal—wallowing in all manner of filthy conversation—from these sins he is happily snatched away—

Ere sin could blight, or sorrow fade,
Death came with timely care—⁶

his memory is odoriferous—no clown curseth, while his stomach half rejecteth, the rank bacon—no coal-heaver bolteth him in reeking sausages—he hath a fair sepulcher in the grateful stomach of the judicious epicure—and for such a tomb might be content to die.

He is the best of Sapor.⁷ Pineapple is great. She is indeed almost too transcendent—a delight, if not sinful, yet so like to sinning, that

³*mundus edibilis* . . . *princeps obsoniorum*. Latin phrases meaning “world of edibles” and “chief of delicacies.”

⁴*amor immunditiae*. Latin for “love of filth.”

⁵*praeludium*. Latin for “prelude” or “beginning.”

⁶*Ere sin could blight*. . . . These lines are from a poem, “Epitaph on an Infant,” by Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

⁷*Sapor*. Taste.

really a tender-conscienced person would do well to pause—too ravishing for mortal taste, she woundeth and excoriateth the lips that approach her—like lovers' kisses, she biteth—she is a pleasure bordering on pain from the fierceness and insanity of her relish—but she stoppeth at the palate—she meddleth not with the appetite—and the coarsest hunger might barter her consistently for a mutton chop.

Pig—let me speak his praise—is no less provocative of the appetite than he is satisfactory to the criticalness of the censorious palate. The strong man may batten on him, and the weakling refuseth not his mild juices.

Unlike to mankind's mixed characters, a bundle of virtues and vices, inexplicably intertwined, and not to

be unraveled without hazard, he is—good throughout. No part of him is better or worse than another. He helpeth, as far as his little means extend, all around. He is the least envious of banquets. He is all neighbors' fare.

I am one of those who freely and ungrudgingly impart a share of the good things of this life which fall to their lot (few as mine are in this kind) to a friend. I protest I take as great an interest in my friend's pleasures, his relishes, and proper satisfactions, as in mine own. "Presents," I often say, "endear Absents." Hares, pheasants, partridges, snipes, barn-door chickens (those "tame villatic fowl"⁸), capons, plovers, brawn, barrels of oysters, I dispense as freely as I receive them. I love to taste them, as it were, upon the tongue of my friend. But a stop must be put somewhere. One would not, like Lear,⁹ "give everything." I make my stand upon pig. Methinks it is an ingratitude

⁸"tame villatic fowl." Barnyard fowl. The phrase is from *Samson Agonistes*, a long poem by John Milton.

⁹*Lear*. In Shakespeare's tragedy *King Lear* gives everything to his two oldest daughters but lives to regret it.



to the Giver of all good favors, to extradomiciliate, or send out of the house, slightly (under pretext of friendship, or I know not what), a blessing so particularly adapted, predestined, I may say, to my individual palate. It argues an insensibility.

I remember a touch of conscience in this kind at school. My good old aunt, who never parted from me at the end of a holiday without stuffing a sweetmeat, or some nice thing, into my pocket, had dismissed me one evening with a smoking plum-cake, fresh from the oven. In my way to school (it was over London Bridge) a grayheaded old beggar saluted me (I have no doubt at this time of day that he was a counterfeit). I had no pence to console him with, and in the vanity of self-denial, and the very coxcombry of charity, school-boy-like, I made him a present of—the whole cake! I walked on a little, buoyed up, as one is on such

occasions, with a sweet soothing of self-satisfaction; but before I had got to the end of the bridge, my better feelings returned, and I burst into tears, thinking how ungrateful I had been to my good aunt, to go and give her good gift away to a stranger, that I had never seen before, and who might be a bad man for aught I knew; and then I thought of the pleasure my aunt would be taking in thinking that I—I myself, and not another—would eat her nice cake—and what should I say to her the next time I saw her—how naughty I was to part with her pretty present—and the odor of that spicy cake came back upon my recollection, and the pleasure and the curiosity I had taken in seeing her make it, and her joy when she sent it to the oven, and how disappointed she would feel that I had never had a bit of it in my mouth at last—and I blamed my impertinent spirit of almsgiving, and out-of-place hypocrisy of goodness, and above all I wished never to see the face again of that insidious, good-for-nothing, old gray impostor.

Our ancestors were nice in their method of sacrificing these tender victims. We read of pigs whipped to death, with something of a shock, as we hear of any other obsolete custom. The age of discipline is gone by, or it would be curious to inquire (in a philosophical light merely) what effect this process might have toward intenerating and dulcifying a substance naturally so mild and



dulcet as the flesh of young pigs. It looks like refining a violet. Yet we should be cautious, while we condemn the inhumanity, how we censure the wisdom of the practice. It might impart a gusto—

I remember an hypothesis, argued upon by the young students, when I was at St. Omer's,¹⁰ and maintained with much learning and pleasantry on both sides, "Whether, supposing that the flavor of a pig who obtained his death by whipping (*per flagellationem extremam*) superadded a pleasure upon the palate of a man

¹⁰St. Omer's. Although there really was a Jesuit college by this name in London, Lamb was never a student there.

more intense than any possible suffering we can conceive in the animal, is man justified in using that method of putting the animal to death?" I forget the decision.

His sauce should be considered. Decidely, a few bread crumbs, done up with his liver and brains, and a dash of mild sage. But, banish, dear Mrs. Cook, I beseech you, the whole onion tribe. Barbecue your whole hogs to your palate, steep them in shalots, stuff them out with plantations of the rank and guilty garlic; you cannot poison them, or make them stronger than they are—but consider, he is a weakling—a flower.

Discussion

1. Why do you think Lamb calls his essay a "dissertation"?
2. Would it be reasonable to claim that the essay tells us as much about Lamb as about roast pig? Would you judge Lamb to be a well-educated man?
3. What are Lamb's views on giving and receiving presents? Do you have the same feeling?
4. Point out specific examples of Lamb's "poker-face" type of humor.
5. Are there any anachronisms in the essay?

Research

1. You might find it fun to write an essay in which you invent a history for your own favorite food. Or choose as your topic some memorable sentence from the essay, perhaps "Presents Endear Absents."
2. Lamb is worth knowing better. Among the essays which will advance your acquaintance are "Dream Children," "Old China," "Imperfect Sympathies," or "The Superannuated Man."



WILLIAM HAZLITT was born at Maidstone, in the south of England, where his father was a Unitarian minister. His father sided with the colonies in their struggle against the mother country, and in 1783 he went to America to preach and lecture in Philadelphia. Four years later the family returned to England and settled in Shropshire.

William studied painting but eventually abandoned it for writing, probably influenced by his great admiration for the writer Samuel Taylor Coleridge, whom he had first met when he was twenty. Hazlitt was doing fairly well as a portrait painter when he gave it up. His last portrait, painted in 1805, was one of his good friend Charles Lamb. It now hangs in the National Portrait Gallery in London.

In 1808 Hazlitt married Sarah Stoddard, but the marriage did not prove a happy one. Mrs. Hazlitt was realistic in her outlook and business-like in her activities, while her husband was romantic, quarrelsome, and moody. For a time the Hazlitts lived in Winterslow, a small town near Salisbury, and it was from here that the essayist set out on many of his journeys about the countryside. After fourteen years of marriage the Hazlitts separated. Hazlitt had trouble getting along with his friends, too. He quarreled with even such devoted companions as Lamb and Hunt.

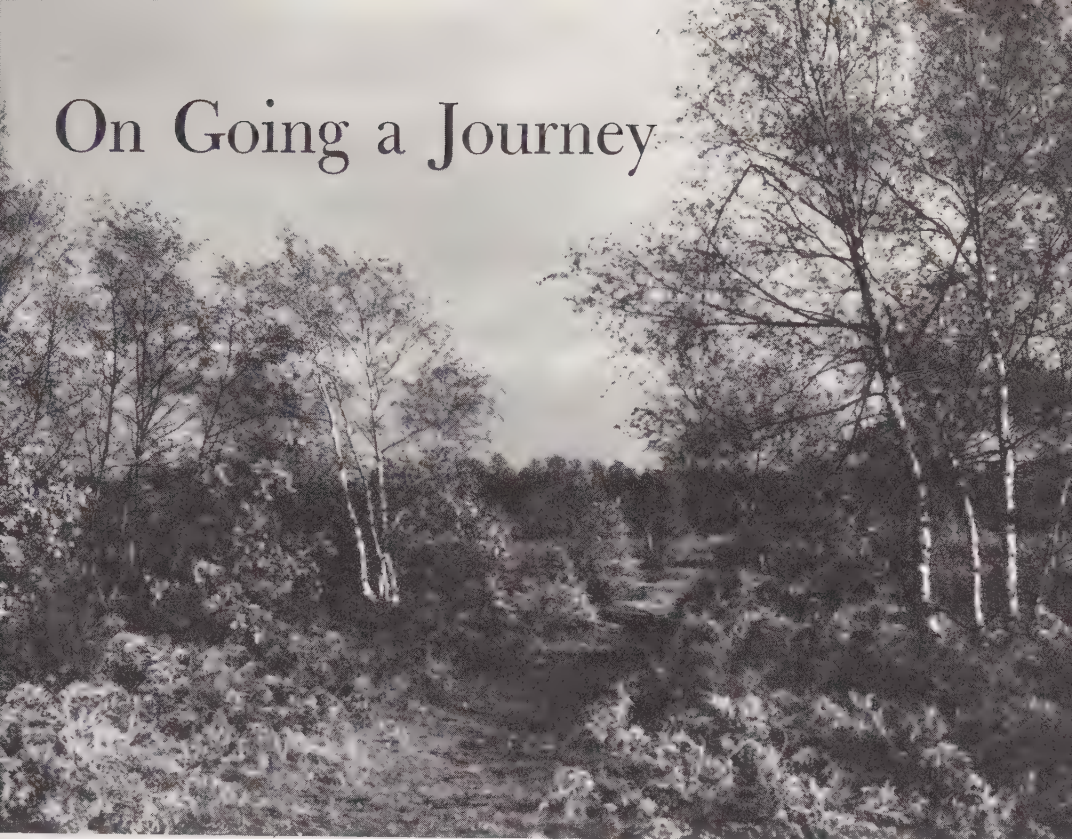
Literary recognition came to Hazlitt in 1816 when he published a collection of essays entitled *The Round Table*. Among his later volumes of essays are *Characters of Shakespeare's Plays*, *The Spirit of the Age*, and *Table Talk*, the volume from which "On Going a Journey" is taken. The essay first appeared in the *New Monthly Magazine* in January, 1822.

To Hazlitt, "going a journey" meant walking. The first railroad in England was not built until eight years after the essay was written, and though there were stagecoaches, they were not for Hazlitt. "On Going a Journey" is a highly subjective essay, revealing an original but cultured personality. The style is clear and simple, energetic and enthusiastic. The hard-hitting sentences give the essay a masculine quality.

Hazlitt's essays earned him public respect as a critic of drama and art. Along with Coleridge he did much to revive interest in, and appreciation of, Shakespeare. It is, however, because the essays acquaint us with an interesting personality and the literary circle in which he moved that they are read today.

WILLIAM HAZLITT 1778-1830

On Going a Journey



One of the pleasantest things in the world is going a journey; but I like to go by myself. I can enjoy society in a room; but out of doors, nature is company enough for me. I am then never less alone than when alone.

The fields his study, nature was his book.¹

I cannot see the wit of walking and talking at the same time. When I am in the country, I wish to vegetate like the country. I am not for criticizing hedge-rows and black cat-

tle. I go out of town in order to forget the town and all that is in it. There are those who for this purpose go to watering-places, and carry the metropolis with them. I like more elbow-room, and fewer incumbrances. I like solitude, when I give myself up to it, for the sake of solitude; nor do I ask for

... a friend in my retreat,
Whom I may whisper solitude is sweet.²

The soul of a journey is liberty, perfect liberty, to think, feel, do just as one pleases. We go a journey chiefly to be free of all impediments and of all inconveniences; to leave ourselves behind, much more to get rid of others. It is because I want

¹"*The fields his study, nature was his book.*" From "Spring" by Robert Bloomfield (1766-1823).

²"... *solitude is sweet.*" From "Retirement" by William Cowper (1731-1800).

a little breathing space to muse on indifferent matters, where Contemplation

May plume her feathers and let grow
her wings,
That in the various bustle of resort
Were all too ruffled, and sometimes
impair'd,³

that I absent myself from the town for awhile, without feeling at a loss the moment I am left by myself. Instead of a friend in a post chaise or in a Tilbury,⁴ to exchange good things with, and vary the same stale topics over again, for once let me have a truce with impertinence. Give me the clear blue sky over my head, and the green turf beneath my feet, a winding road before me, and a three hours' march to dinner—and then to thinking! It is hard if I cannot start some game on these long heaths. I laugh, I run, I leap, I sing for joy. From the point of yonder rolling cloud, I plunge into my past being, and revel there, as the sun-burnt Indian plunges headlong into the wave that wafts him to his native shore. Then long-forgotten things, like "sunken wrack and sumless treasures,"⁵ burst upon my eager sight, and I begin to feel, think, and be myself again. Instead of an awkward silence, broken by attempts at wit or dull commonplaces, mine is that undisturbed silence of the heart which alone is perfect eloquence. No one likes puns, alliterations, antitheses, argument, and analysis better than I do; but I sometimes had rather be without

them. "Leave, oh, leave me to my repose!"⁶ I have just now other business in hand, which would seem idle to you, but is with me "very stuff of the conscience."⁷ Is not this wild rose sweet without a comment? Does not this daisy leap to my heart set in its coat of emerald? Yet if I were to explain to you the circumstance that has so endeared it to me, you would only smile. Had I not better then keep it to myself, and let it serve me to brood over, from here to yonder craggy point, and from thence onward to the far-distant horizon? I should be but bad company all that way, and therefore prefer being alone. I have heard it said that you may, when the moody fit comes on, walk or ride on by yourself, and indulge your reveries. But this looks like a breach of manners, a neglect of others, and you are thinking all the time that you ought to rejoin your party. "Out upon such half-faced fellowship,"⁸ say I. I like to be either entirely to myself, or entirely at the disposal of others; to talk or be silent, to walk or sit still, to be

³"... sometimes impair'd." From *Comus*, a drama in verse form, by John Milton.

⁴*post chaise* . . . *Tilbury*. Popular carriages of the time. The Tilbury was a two-wheeled vehicle.

⁵"*sunken wrack and sumless treasures*." From Shakespeare's *Henry V*.

⁶"*Leave, oh, leave me to my repose!*" From Thomas Gray's poem, "Descent of Odin."

⁷"*very stuff of the conscience*." From Shakespeare's *Othello*.

⁸"*Out upon such half-faced fellowship*." From Shakespeare's *Henry IV*.

sociable or solitary. I was pleased with an observation of Mr. Cobbett's,⁹ that "he thought it a bad French custom to drink our wine with our meals, and that an Englishman ought to do only one thing at a time." So I cannot talk and think, or indulge in melancholy musing and lively conversation by fits and starts. "Let me have a companion of my way," says Sterne,¹⁰ "were it but to remark how the shadows lengthen as the sun declines." It is beautifully said: but in my opinion, this continual comparing of notes interferes with the involuntary impression of things upon the mind, and hurts the sentiment. If you only hint what you feel in a kind of dumb show, it is insipid: if you have to explain it, it is making a toil of a pleasure. You cannot read the book of nature, without being perpetually put to the trouble of translating it for the benefit of others.

I am for the synthetical method on a journey, in preference to the analytical. I am content to lay in a stock of ideas then, and to examine and anatomize them afterward. I want to see my vague notions float like the down of the thistle before the breeze, and not to have them entangled in the briers and thorns of controversy. For once, I like to have it all my own way; and this is

impossible unless you are alone, or in such company as I do not covet. I have no objection to argue a point with anyone for twenty miles of measured road, but not for pleasure. If you remark the scent of a bean field crossing the road, perhaps your fellow traveler has no smell. If you point to a distant object, perhaps he is shortsighted, and has to take out his glass to look at it. There is a feeling in the air, a tone in the color of a cloud which hits your fancy, but the effect of which you are unable to account for. There is then no sympathy, but an uneasy craving after it, and a dissatisfaction which pursues you on the way, and in the end probably produces ill humor. Now I never quarrel with myself, and take all my own conclusions for granted till I find it necessary to defend them against objections. It is not merely that you may not be of accord on the objects and circumstances that present themselves before you—these may recall a number of objects, and lead to associations too delicate and refined to be possibly communicated to others. Yet these I love to cherish, and sometimes still fondly clutch them, when I can escape from the throng to do so. To give way to our feelings before company, seems extravagance or affectation; and on the other hand, to have to unravel this mystery of our being at every turn, and to make others take an equal interest in it (otherwise the end is not answered) is a

⁹*Cobbett*. William Cobbett (1762-1835) was a famous economist and writer.

¹⁰*Sterne*. Laurence Sterne (1713-1768) was a clergyman and one of England's first novelists.



task to which few are competent. We must "give it an understanding, but no tongue."¹¹ My old friend C—, ¹² however, could do both. He could go on in the most delightful explanatory way over hill and dale, a summer's day, and convert a landscape into a didactic poem or a Pindaric ode.¹³ "He talked far above singing."¹⁴ If I could so clothe my ideas in sounding and flowing words, I might perhaps wish to have some one with me to admire the swelling theme; or I could be more content, were it possible for me still to hear his echoing voice in the woods of Alfoxden. They had "that

fine madness in them which our first poets had"; and if they could have been caught by some rare instrument, would have breathed such strains as the following:¹⁵

. . . Here be woods as green
As any, air likewise as fresh and sweet
As when smooth zephyrus plays on the
fleet
Face of the curled stream, with flow'rs
as many
As the young spring gives, and as choice
as any;
Here be all new delights, cool streams
and wells,
Arbors o'ergrown with woodbine, caves
and dells;
Choose where thou wilt, while I sit by
and sing,
Or gather rushes to make many a ring
For thy long fingers; tell thee tales of
love,
How the pale Phoebe, hunting in a
grove,
First saw the boy Endymion, from whose
eyes
She took eternal fire that never dies;
How she convey'd him softly in a sleep,
His temples bound with poppy, to the
steep
Head of old Latmos, where she stoops
each night,
Gilding the mountain with her brother's
light,
To kiss her sweetest. . . .

FAITHFUL SHEPHERDESS.

¹¹"give it an understanding, but no tongue."
From Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

¹²C—, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, whom Hazlitt greatly admired.

¹³*Pindaric ode*. Pindar was a Greek lyric poet of the fifth century B.C.

¹⁴"He talked far above singing." From a play, *Philaster*, by Beaumont and Fletcher.

¹⁵The quotation is from *The Faithful Shepherdess*, a play in verse form by Beaumont (1584-1616) and Fletcher (1579-1625).

Had I words and images at command like these, I would attempt to wake the thoughts that lie slumbering on golden ridges in the evening clouds: but at the sight of nature my fancy, poor as it is, droops and closes up its leaves, like flowers at sunset. I can make nothing out on the spot:—I must have time to collect myself.—

In general, a good thing spoils out-of-door prospects: it should be reserved for Table-talk. L—¹⁶ is for this reason, I take it, the worst company in the world out of doors; because he is the best within. I grant, there is one subject on which it is pleasant to talk on a journey; and that is, what one shall have for supper when we get to our inn at night. The open air improves this sort of conversation or friendly altercation, by setting a keener edge on appetite. Every mile of the road heightens the flavor of the viands we expect at the end of it. How fine it is to enter some old town, walled and turreted, just at the approach of nightfall, or to come to some straggling village, with the lights streaming through the surrounding gloom; and then after inquiring for the best entertainment that the place affords, to “take one’s ease at one’s inn”!¹⁷ These eventful moments in our lives’ history are too precious, too full of solid, heartfelt happiness to be frittered and dribbled away in imperfect sympathy. I would have them all to myself, and drain them to the last drop: they

will do to talk of or to write about afterward. What a delicate speculation it is, after drinking whole goblets of tea,

The cups that cheer, but not inebriate,¹⁸

and letting the fumes ascend into the brain, to sit considering what we shall have for supper—eggs and a rasher, a rabbit smothered in onions, or an excellent veal cutlet! Sancho¹⁹ in such a situation once fixed upon cowheel; and his choice, though he could not help it, is not to be disparaged. Then in the intervals of pictured scenery and Shandean²⁰ contemplation, to catch the preparation and the stir in the kitchen—*Procul, O procul este profani!*²¹ These hours are sacred to silence and to musing, to be treasured up in the memory, and to feed the source of smiling thoughts hereafter. I would not waste them in idle talk; or if I must have the integrity of fancy broken in upon, I would rather it were by a stranger than a friend. A stranger takes his

¹⁶L—. Charles Lamb was one of the few men with whom Hazlitt established an enduring friendship.

¹⁷“take one’s ease at one’s inn.” From Shakespeare’s *Henry IV*.

¹⁸“The cups that cheer, but not inebriate.” From Cowper’s *The Task*.

¹⁹Sancho. Sancho Panza is a rustic character in *Don Quixote*, a novel by Miguel de Cervantes.

²⁰Shandean. The reference is to Tristram Shandy in Laurence Sterne’s novel of the same name. Shandy was much given to contemplation.

²¹*Procul, O procul este profani!* “Hence, O hence, ye that are uninitiated.” The quotation is from the Roman poet Virgil.

hue and character from the time and place; he is a part of the furniture and costume of an inn. If he is a Quaker, or from the West Riding of Yorkshire, so much the better. I do not even try to sympathize with him, and he breaks no squares. I associate nothing with my traveling companion but present objects and passing events. In his ignorance of me and my affairs, I in a manner forget myself. But a friend reminds one of other things, rips up old grievances, and destroys the abstraction of the scene. He comes in ungraciously between us and our imaginary character. Something is dropped in the course of conversation that gives a hint of your profession and pursuits; or from having someone with you that knows the less sublime portions of your history, it seems that other people do. You are no longer a citizen of the world: but your "unhoused free condition is put into circumscription and confine."²²

The incognito of an inn is one of its striking privileges—"lord of one's self, uncumber'd with a name."²³ Oh! it is great to shake off the trammels of the world and of public opinion—to lose our importunate, tormenting, everlasting personal identity in the elements of nature, and become the creature of the moment, clear of all ties—to hold to the universe only by a dish of sweet-breads, and to owe nothing but the score of the evening—and no longer seeking for applause and meeting



with contempt, to be known by no other title than *the Gentleman in the Parlour!* One may take one's choice of all characters in this romantic state of uncertainty as to one's real pretensions, and become indefinitely respectable and negatively right-worshipful. We baffle prejudice and disappoint conjecture; and from being so to others, begin to be objects of curiosity and wonder even to ourselves. We are no more those hackneyed commonplaces that we appear in the world: an inn restores us to the level of nature, and quits scores with society! I have certainly spent some enviable hours at inns—sometimes when I have been left entirely to myself, and have tried to solve some metaphysical problem, as once at Witham-common, where

²²" . . . put into circumscription and confine." From Shakespeare's *Othello*.

²³" . . . uncumber'd with a name." From Dryden's "Epistle to Sir R. Howard."



I found out the proof that likeness is not a case of the association of ideas—at other times, when there have been pictures in the room, as at St. Neot's (I think it was), where I first met with Gribelin's engravings of the Cartoons,²⁴ into which I entered at once and at a little inn on the borders of Wales, where there happened to be hanging some of Westall's drawings, which I compared triumphantly (for a theory that I had, not for the admired artist) with the figure of a girl who had

²⁴*Cartoons*. These were pictures of Biblical subjects by the great Italian artist Raphael, intended for reproduction in tapestries. See his cartoon of St. Paul preaching, above.

²⁵*Paul and Virginia*. This French romantic novel by Bernardin de St. Pierre had been translated into English in 1788.

²⁶*Madame D'Arblay*. This is the married name of the English novelist Fanny Burney. *Camilla* was published in 1796.

²⁷*New Eloise*. This novel by the French writer Jean Jacques Rousseau was told in the form of letters.

²⁸*bon bouche*. A good taste.

ferried me over the Severn, standing up in the boat between me and the twilight—at other times I might mention luxuriating in books, with a peculiar interest in this way, as I remember sitting up half the night to read *Paul and Virginia*,²⁵ which I picked up at an inn at Bridgewater, after being drenched in the rain all day; and at the same place I got through two volumes of Madame D'Arblay's²⁶ *Camilla*. It was on the tenth of April, 1798, that I sat down to a volume of the *New Eloise*,²⁷ at the inn at Llangollen, over a bottle of sherry and cold chicken. The letter I chose was that in which St. Preux describes his feelings as he first caught a glimpse from the heights of the Jura of the Pays de Vaud, which I had brought with me as a *bon bouche*²⁸ to crown the evening with. It was my birthday, and I had for the first time come from a place in the neighbourhood to visit this delightful spot. The road to Llangollen turns off between Chirk and Wrexham; and on passing a certain point, you come all at once upon the valley, which opens like an amphitheatre, broad, barren hills rising in majestic state on either side, with "green upland swells that echo to the bleat of flocks" below, and the river Dee babbling over its stony bed in the midst of them. The valley at this time "glittered green with sunny showers," and a budding ash-tree dipped its tender branches in the chiding stream. How proud, how glad I was to walk along the

high road that overlooks the delicious prospect, repeating the lines which I have just quoted from Mr. Coleridge's poems! But besides the prospect which opened beneath my feet, another also opened to my inward sight, a heavenly vision, on which were written, in letters large as Hope could make them, these four words, LIBERTY, GENIUS, LOVE, VIRTUE; which have since faded into the light of common day, or mock my idle gaze.

The beautiful is vanished, and returns
not.²⁹

Still I would return some time or other to this enchanted spot; but I would return to it alone. What other self could I find to share that influx of thoughts of regret and delight, the fragments of which I could hardly conjure up to myself, so much have they been broken and defaced! I could stand on some tall rock and overlook the precipice of years that separates me from what I then was. I was at that time going shortly to visit the poet whom I have above named. Where is he now? Not only I myself have changed; the world, which was then new to me, has become old and incorrigible. Yet will I turn to thee in thought, O sylvan Dee, in joy, in youth and gladness as thou then wert; and thou shalt always be to me the river of Paradise, where I will drink of the waters of life freely!

There is hardly any thing that shows the short-sightedness of ca-

priciousness of the imagination more than traveling does. With change of place we change our ideas; nay, our opinions and feelings. We can by an effort indeed transport ourselves to old and long-forgotten scenes, and then the picture of the mind revives again; but we forget those that we have just left. It seems that we can think but of one place at a time. The canvas of the fancy is but of a certain extent, and if we paint one set of objects upon it, they immediately efface every other. We cannot enlarge our conceptions, we only shift our point of view. The landscape bares its bosom to the enraptured eye, we take our fill of it, and seem as if we could form no other image of beauty or grandeur. We pass on, and think no more of it: the horizon that shuts it from our sight, also blots it from our memory like a dream. In traveling through a wild barren country, I can form no idea of a woody and cultivated one. It appears to me that all the world must be barren, like what I see of it. In the country we forget the town, and in town we despise the country. "Beyond Hyde Park," says Sir Fopling Flutter, "all is a desert."³⁰ All that part of the map that we do not see before us is a blank. The world in

²⁹"The beautiful is vanished, and returns not." From Coleridge's translation of Schiller's play, *Wallenstein's Death*.

³⁰"Beyond Hyde Park," says Sir Fopling Flutter, "all is a desert." Hyde Park is an old and famous London park. Sir Fopling is a character in *Etherege's play, The Man of Mode*.



our conceit of it is not much bigger than a nut-shell. It is not one prospect expanded into another, county joined to county, kingdom to kingdom, lands to seas, making an image voluminous and vast;—the mind can form no larger idea of space than the eye can take in at a single glance. The rest is a name written in a map, a calculation of arithmetic. For instance, what is the true signification of that immense mass of territory and population known by the name of China to us? An inch of paste-board on a wooden globe, of no more account than a China orange! Things near us are seen of the size of life: things at a distance are diminished to the size of the understanding. We measure the universe by ourselves, and even comprehend the texture of our own being only piecemeal. In this way, however, we remember an infinity of things and places. The mind is like a mechanical instrument that plays a great variety of tunes, but it must play them in succession. One idea recalls another, but it at the same time excludes all others. In trying to renew old recollections, we cannot as it were unfold the whole web

of our existence; we must pick out the single threads. So in coming to a place where we have formerly lived and with which we have intimate associations, every one must have found that the feeling grows more vivid the nearer we approach the spot, from the mere anticipation of the actual impression: we remember circumstances, feelings, persons, faces, names that we had not thought of for years; but for the time all the rest of the world is forgotten—To return to the question I have quitted above.

I have no objections to go to see ruins, aqueducts, pictures, in company with a friend or a party, but rather the contrary, for the former reason reversed. They are intelligible matters and will bear talking about. The sentiment here is not tacit, but communicable and overt. Salisbury Plain is barren of criticism, but Stonehenge will bear a discussion antiquarian, picturesque, and philosophical. In setting out on a party of pleasure, the first consideration always is where we shall go to; in taking a solitary ramble, the question is what we shall meet with by the way. "The mind is its own

place";³¹ nor are we anxious to arrive at the end of our journey. I can myself do the honours indifferently well to works of art and curiosity. I once took a party³² to Oxford with no mean *éclat*—showed them that seat of the Muses at a distance,

The glistening spires and pinnacles
adorn'd —

descanted on the learned air that breathes from the grassy quadrangles and stone walls of halls and colleges—was at home in the Bodleian;³³ and at Blenheim³⁴ quite superseded the powdered ciceroni³⁵ that attended us, and that pointed in vain with his wand to commonplace beauties in matchless pictures.—As another exception to the above reasoning, I should not feel confident in venturing on a journey in a foreign country without a companion. I should want at intervals to hear the sound of my own language. There is an involuntary antipathy in the mind of an Englishman to foreign manners and notions

that requires the assistance of social sympathy to carry it off. As the distance from home increases, this relief, which was at first a luxury, becomes a passion and an appetite. A person would almost feel stifled to find himself in the deserts of Arabia without friends and countrymen; there must be allowed to be something in the view of Athens or old Rome that claims the utterance of speech; and I own that the Pyramids are too mighty for any single contemplation. In such situations, so opposite to all one's ordinary train of ideas, one seems a species by one's-self, a limb torn off from soci-

³¹"*The mind is its own place.*" This and the next quotation are from Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

^{32a}*party.* The party consisted of Charles Lamb and his sister Mary.

³³*Bodleian.* The library established at Oxford early in the seventeenth century by Sir Thomas Bodley. The library receives a copy of every book published in Great Britain.

³⁴*Blenheim.* The estate presented to the Duke of Marlborough in recognition of his victory at the Battle of Blenheim in 1704. The house was in Hazlitt's time, and is today, open to the public.

³⁵*ciceroni.* Guides.

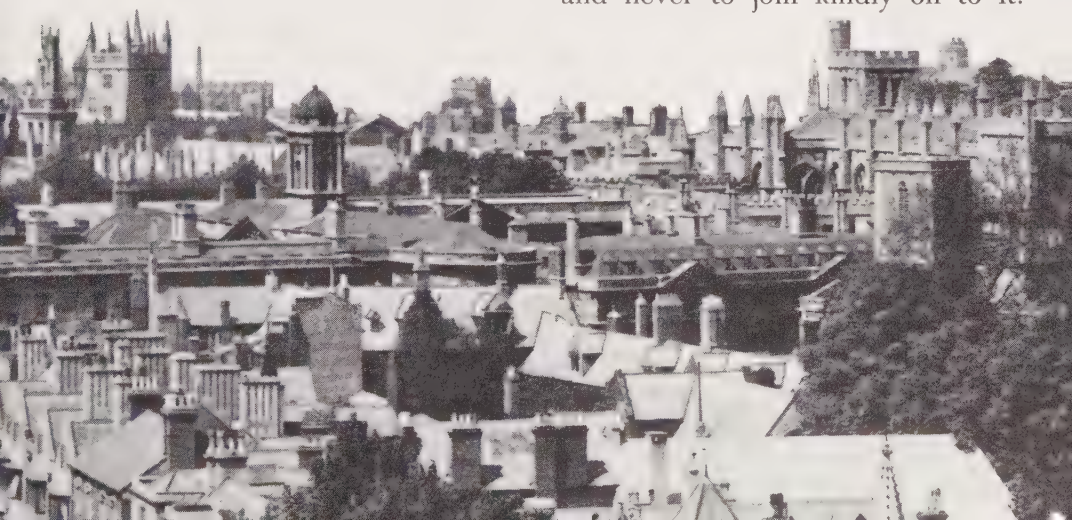


ety, unless one can meet with instant fellowship and support.—Yet I did not feel this want or craving very pressing once, when I first set my foot on the laughing shores of France. Calais was peopled with novelty and delight. The confused, busy murmur of the place was like oil and wine poured into my ears; nor did the mariners' hymn, which was sung from the top of an old crazy vessel in the harbour, as the sun went down, send an alien sound into my soul. I only breathed the air of general humanity. I walked over "the vine-covered hills and gay regions of France,"³⁶ erect and satisfied; for the image of man was not cast down and chained to the foot of arbitrary thrones; I was at no loss for language, for that of all the great schools of painting was open to me. The whole is vanished

like a shade. Pictures, heroes, glory, freedom, all are fled: nothing remains but the Bourbons³⁷ and the French people!—There is undoubtedly a sensation in travelling into foreign parts that is to be had nowhere else; but it is more pleasing at the time than lasting. It is too remote from our habitual associations to be a common topic of discourse or reference, and, like a dream or another state of existence, does not piece into our daily modes of life. It is an animated but a momentary hallucination. It demands an effort to exchange our actual for our ideal identity; and to feel the pulse of our old transports revive very keenly, we must "jump" all our present comforts and connexions. Our romantic and itinerant character is not to be domesticated. Dr. Johnson remarked how little foreign travel added to the facilities of conversation in those who had been abroad. In fact, the time we have spent there is both delightful and in one sense instructive; but it appears to be cut out of our substantial, downright existence, and never to join kindly on to it.

³⁶"... *gay regions of France.*" From William Roscoe's "Song Written for the Purpose of Being Recited on the Anniversary of the 14th August, 1791."

³⁷*Bourbons.* Following the defeat of Napoleon the Bourbon dynasty was restored to the throne of France in the person of Louis XVIII.



We are not the same, but another, and perhaps more enviable individual, all the time we are out of our own country. We are lost to ourselves, as well as our friends. So the poet somewhat quaintly sings,

Out of my country and myself I go.³⁸

Those who wish to forget painful thoughts, do well to absent themselves for a while from the ties and

objects that recall them; but we can be said only to fulfil our destiny in the place that gave us birth. I should on this account like well enough to spend the whole of my life in traveling abroad, if I could anywhere borrow another life to spend afterward at home!

³⁸*"Out of my country and myself I go."*
Hazlitt is probably quoting himself here.

Discussion

1. What four reasons does Hazlitt give for going on a journey? Which of them do you share?
2. What arguments does Hazlitt present for traveling alone?
3. What distinction does he make between traveling in his own country and traveling abroad?
4. Can you support with evidence of your own Hazlitt's claim that "with change of place, we change our ideas, our opinions and feelings"?
5. Why do you think Hazlitt sprinkled his essay so liberally with quotations? Why, in most cases, did he not give the authors?

Research

1. If you want to become better acquainted with Hazlitt, you might read "On the Feeling of Immortality in Youth," "On the Look of a Gentleman," "On the Pleasures of Painting," or "The Fight."
2. Perhaps you would like to know what other writers have said about traveling. Robert Louis Stevenson has written an essay called "Walking Tours" and Hilaire Belloc has one called "The Excursion." You might also like to browse around in W. H. Hudson's book, *Afoot in England*. Your librarian will have other suggestions.
3. For an essay of your own you might choose some such topic as "Traveling Alone," "Traveling with My Family," or "Going Places in a Car."

1785-1859

THOMAS De QUINCEY

THOMAS DE QUINCEY was born in Manchester, where his father was a wealthy importer. His parents were cultured people, and Thomas grew up with a love for reading which stayed with him all his life. He had a retentive memory for miscellaneous information. At sixteen Thomas ran away from home. After two years of wandering and starving he was reconciled with his family and went to Oxford. He spent five years there but because of shyness never attempted to qualify for a degree.

At twenty-one De Quincey inherited a small amount of money and rented Wordsworth's old home, Dove Cottage, in the Lake District. He stayed there for twenty years, enjoying the companionship of Coleridge and Southey and, for a time, of Wordsworth. In 1816 he married Margaret Simpson. Three years later he found himself in financial difficulties and began to write for newspapers and magazines.

Because he had begun to suffer from neuralgia while still in college, physicians started De Quincey on opium, the harmful effects of which were not known then, and he became a lifelong addict. For long periods he was able to limit the intake of opium and lead a normal existence. At other times he was a helpless victim of the drug. He first gained literary recognition with his *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*, published in *The London Magazine* in 1821, when he believed he had conquered the habit.

From 1830 on De Quincey and his family lived in Edinburgh, where he spent much of his time dodging bill collectors. He wrote many essays, a novel, and a number of biographies, including that of Shakespeare, for the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

Influenced by drugs, De Quincey wrote in what he himself called "impassioned prose." It is an oratorical style in which sound plays as important a part as sense. His essays are rambling and desultory. His ideas are not logically arranged, but, as is true of the American essayist Emerson, individual paragraphs and individual sentences are often strikingly vivid and impressive.

In connection with the essay you are about to read, it is worth knowing that De Quincey classified literature as either "literature of *knowledge*" or "literature of *power*," the former appealing to reason and the latter, which he considered by far the greater, appealing to the emotions. It is the emotional appeal in the scene from *Macbeth* that De Quincey seeks to analyze.



On the Knocking at the Gate in *Macbeth*



From my boyish days I had always felt a great perplexity on one point in *Macbeth*. It was this:—the knocking at the gate which succeeds to the murder of Duncan produced to my feelings an effect for which I never could account. The effect was that it reflected back upon the murderer a peculiar awfulness and a depth of solemnity; yet, however obstinately I endeavored with my understanding to comprehend this, for many years I never could see *why* it should produce such an effect.

Here I pause for one moment to exhort the reader never to pay any attention to his understanding when it stands in opposition to any other faculty of his mind. The mere understanding, however useful and in-

dispensable, is the meanest faculty in the human mind and the most to be distrusted; and yet the great majority of people trust to nothing else,—which may do for ordinary life, but not for philosophical purposes. Of this, out of ten thousand instances that I might produce, I will cite one. Ask of any person whatsoever who is not previously prepared for the demand by a knowledge of perspective, to draw in the rudest way the commonest appearance which depends upon the laws of that science—as, for instance, to represent the effect of two walls standing at right angles to each other, or the appearance of the houses on each side of a street, as seen by a person looking down the street from one extremity. Now, in

all cases, unless the person has happened to observe in pictures how it is that artists produce these effects, he will be utterly unable to make the smallest approximation to it. Yet why? For he has actually seen the effect every day of his life. The reason is that he allows his understanding to overrule his eyes. His understanding, which includes no intuitive knowledge of the laws of vision, can furnish him with no reason why a line which is known and can be proved to be a horizontal line should not *appear* a horizontal line; a line that made any angle with the perpendicular less than a right angle would seem to him to indicate that his houses were all tumbling down together. Accordingly he makes the line of his houses a horizontal line, and fails, of course, to produce the effect demanded. Here then is one instance out of many, in which not only the understanding is allowed to overrule the eyes, but where the understanding is positively allowed to obliterate the eyes, as it were; for not only does the man believe the evidence of his understanding in opposition to that of his eyes, but (which is monstrous) the idiot is not aware that his eyes ever gave such evidence. He does not know that he has seen (and therefore, *quoad*,¹ his consciousness has

not seen) that which he *has* seen every day of his life.

But to return from this digression. My understanding could furnish no reason why the knocking at the gate in *Macbeth* should produce any effect, direct or reflected. In fact, my understanding said positively that it could *not* produce any effect. But I knew better; I felt that it did; and I waited and clung to the problem until further knowledge should enable me to solve it. At length, in 1812, Mr. Williams² made his *début* on the stage of Ratcliffe Highway, and executed those unparalleled murders which have procured for him such a brilliant and undying reputation. On which murders, by the way, I must observe, that in one respect they have had an ill effect, by making the connoisseur in murder very fastidious in his taste, and dissatisfied with anything that has been since done in that line. All other murders look pale by the deep crimson of his; and, as an amateur once said to me in a querulous tone, "There has been absolutely nothing *doing* since his time, or nothing that's worth speaking of." But this is wrong, for it is unreasonable to expect all men to be great artists, and born with the genius of Mr. Williams. Now it will be remembered that in the first of these murders (that of the Marrs) the same incident (of a knocking at the door soon after the work of extermination was complete) did actually occur which the genius of

¹*quoad*. As far as.

²Mr. Williams. This is a reference to an actual crime, but it is also a reference to De Quincey's essay, "Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts."

Shakespeare has invented; and all good judges, and the most eminent dilettanti,³ acknowledged the felicity of Shakespeare's suggestion as soon as it was actually realized. Here then was a fresh proof that I had been right in relying on my own feeling in opposition to my understanding; and again I set myself to study the problem. At length I solved it to my own satisfaction; and my solution is this: Murder, in ordinary cases, where the sympathy is wholly directed to the case of the murdered person, is an incident of coarse and vulgar horror; and for this reason—that it flings the interest exclusively upon the natural but ignoble instinct by which we cleave to life; an instinct which, as being indispensable to the primal law of self-preservation, is the same in kind—though different in degree—amongst all living creatures. This instinct, therefore, because it annihilates all distinctions, and degrades the greatest of men to the level of “the poor beetle that we tread on,” exhibits human nature in its most abject and humiliating attitude. Such an attitude would little suit the purposes of the poet. What then must he do? He must throw the interest on the murderer. Our sympathy must be with *him* (of course I mean a sympathy of comprehension, a sympathy by which we enter into his feelings, and are made to understand them—not a sympathy of pity or approbation). In the murdered person all strife of

thought, all flux and reflux of passion and of purpose are crushed by one overwhelming panic; the fear of instant death smites him “with its petrific mace.”⁴ But in the murderer, such a murderer as a poet will condescend to, there must be raging some great storm of passion—jealousy, ambition, vengeance, hatred—which will create a hell within him; and into this hell we are to look.

In *Macbeth*, for the sake of gratifying his own enormous and teeming faculty of creation, Shakespeare has introduced two murderers; and, as usual in his hands, they are remarkably discriminated. But—though in *Macbeth* the strife of mind is greater than in his wife, the tiger spirit not so awake, and his feelings caught chiefly by contagion from her—yet, as both were finally involved in the guilt of murder, the murderous mind of necessity is finally to be presumed in both. This was to be expressed; and on its own account, as well as to make it a more proportionable antagonist to the unoffending nature of their victim, “the gracious Duncan,” and adequately to expound “the deep damnation of his taking off,” this was to be expressed with peculiar energy. We were to be made to feel that the human nature—i. e., the divine nature of love and mercy, spread through

³*dilettanti*. Amateur students of the arts.

⁴“with its petrific mace.” With its petrifying club. De Quincey is quoting from Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

the hearts of all creatures, and seldom utterly withdrawn from man—was gone, vanished, extinct, and that the fiendish nature had taken its place. And, as this effect is marvelously accomplished in the *dialogues* and *soliloquies* themselves, so it is finally consummated by the expedient under consideration; and it is to this that I now solicit the reader's attention. If the reader has ever witnessed a wife, daughter, or sister, in a fainting fit, he may chance to have observed that the most affecting moment in such a spectacle is that in which a sigh and a stirring announce the recommencement of suspended life. Or, if the reader has ever been present in a vast metropolis on the day when some great national idol was carried in funeral pomp to his grave, and, chancing to walk near the course through which it passed, has felt powerfully, in the silence and desertion of the streets and in the stagnation of ordinary business, the deep interest which at that moment was possessing the heart of man,—if all at once he should hear the death-like stillness broken up by the sound of wheels rattling away from the scene, and making known that the transitory vision was dissolved, he will be aware that at no moment was his sense of the complete suspension and pause in ordinary human concerns so full and affecting as at that moment when the suspension ceases, and the goings-on of human life are suddenly resumed. All action in any

direction is best expounded, measured, and made apprehensible, by reaction. Now apply this to the case in *Macbeth*. Here, as I have said, the retiring of the human heart and the entrance of the fiendish heart was to be expressed and made sensible. Another world has stepped in; and the murderers are taken out of the region of human things, human purposes, human desires. They are transfigured: Lady Macbeth is "unsexed"; Macbeth has forgot that he was born of woman; both are conformed to the image of devils; and the world of devils is suddenly revealed. But how shall this be conveyed and made palpable? In order that a new world may step in, this world must for a time disappear. The murderers, and the murder, must be insulated—cut off by an immeasurable gulf from the ordinary tide and succession of human affairs—locked up and sequestered in some deep recess; we must be made sensible that the world of ordinary life is suddenly arrested—laid asleep—tranced—racked into a dread armistice; time must be annihilated; relation to things without abolished; and all must pass self-withdrawn into a deep syncope and suspension of earthly passion. Hence it is that, when the deed is done, when the work of darkness is perfect, then the world of darkness passes away like a pageantry in the clouds: the knocking at the gate is heard, and it makes known audibly that the reaction has

commenced; the human has made its reflux upon the fiendish; the pulses of life are beginning to beat again; and the re-establishment of the goings-on of the world in which we live first makes us profoundly sensible of the awful parenthesis that had suspended them.

O mighty poet! Thy works are not as those of other men, simply and merely great works of art, but are also like the phenomena of nature, like the sun and the sea, the

stars and the flowers, like frost and snow, rain and dew, hailstorm and thunder, which are to be studied with entire submission of our own faculties, and in the perfect faith that in them there can be no too much or too little, nothing useless or inert, but that, the farther we press in our discoveries, the more we shall see proofs of design and self-supporting arrangement where the careless eye had seen nothing but accident!

Discussion

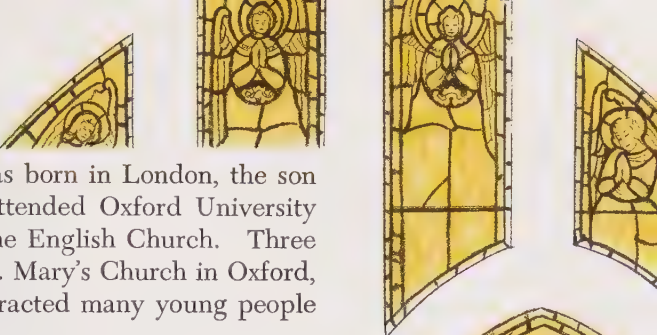
What was the effect of the knocking at the gate that De Quincey felt but couldn't understand?

Having raised the question of the knocking at the gate, why does De Quincey leave it for several long paragraphs? What is accomplished in these paragraphs?

3. What does De Quincey mean by saying your sympathy must be with Macbeth rather than with the man he murdered?
4. How does De Quincey finally interpret the knocking at the gate?
5. In what respect does De Quincey claim the works of Shakespeare are like phenomena of nature?

Research

1. If you have already read *Macbeth*, you will want to reread the scene De Quincey is writing about. Can you think of any other interpretation of the scene? If you have not yet read the play, you will want to come back to this essay when you do read it.
2. Have you ever had an experience in which your understanding deceived you? If you have, it might provide material for an interesting essay of your own.
3. Some other essays by De Quincey you may find interesting are "The English Mail-Coach," "Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts," and "Joan of Arc."



JOHN HENRY NEWMAN was born in London, the son of a wealthy banker. He attended Oxford University and in 1824 took orders in the English Church. Three years later he became vicar of St. Mary's Church in Oxford, where his brilliant preaching attracted many young people to the church.

In time Newman became dissatisfied, feeling that as a state-supported function of government, the Church of England was not giving the spiritual leadership a Christian church should. While on a trip to Italy in 1833 Newman reached the decision he would attempt to reform the church. It was on the way home from Italy, while sailing from Palermo to Marseilles, that he wrote the still well-loved hymn, "Lead, Kindly Light." Upon his return Newman became one of the founders and leaders of the Oxford Movement, which sought to bring to modern life some of the spirit of early Christianity.

As Newman explored more deeply the history of the early Christian church, he became more and more attracted to Roman Catholicism. Finally in 1845 he joined the Roman Catholic Church. His conversion shocked the whole English Church. Many accused Newman of dishonesty and treachery.

In 1846 Newman was ordained a priest. From 1854 to 1858 he served as rector of the newly established Catholic University in Dublin. A series of lectures which he gave there later became *The Idea of a University Defined*, the book from which the essay you are about to read is taken. Many present day theories of liberal arts education can be traced to this volume of Newman's.

Newman spent most of the last forty years of his life at the Oratory of St. Philip Neri in Birmingham, where he established a school for Catholic boys. There in 1864 he wrote an autobiography which he called *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, which is Latin for *An Explanation of His Life*. The autobiography was so frank and so obviously sincere that even those who opposed his change of religion became his admirers.

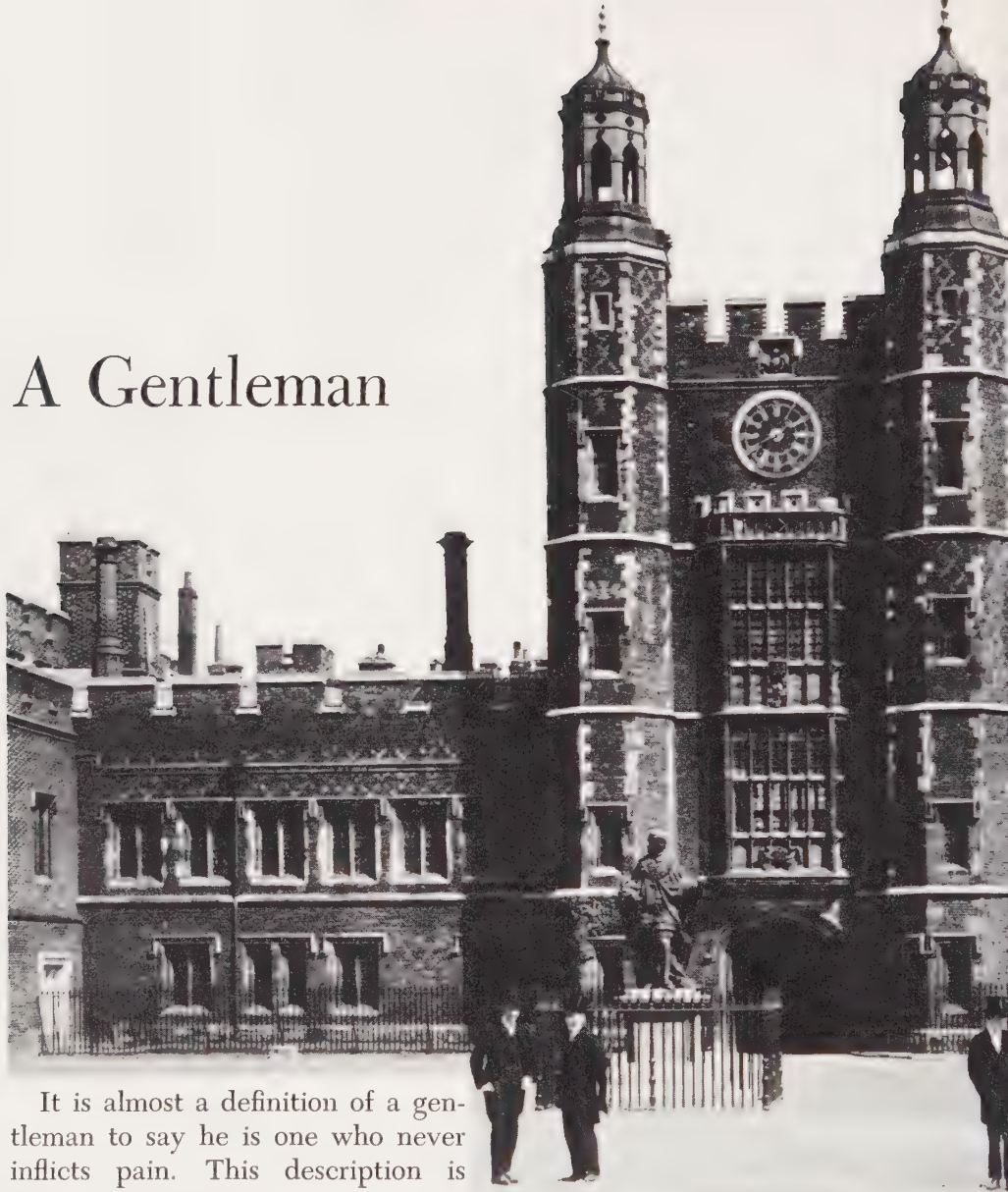
It is Newman's genuine power as a writer which entitles him to a place in English literature. His prose is notable for its logic and clarity and the nobility of its style. As you will observe, Newman was a master of the balanced sentence.

1801-1890

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN



A Gentleman



It is almost a definition of a gentleman to say he is one who never inflicts pain. This description is both refined and, as far as it goes, accurate. He is mainly occupied in merely removing the obstacles which hinder the free and unembarrassed action of those about him, and he concurs with their movements rather than takes the initiative himself. His benefits may be considered as parallel to what are

called comforts or conveniences in arrangements of a personal nature; like an easy chair or a good fire, which do their part in dispelling cold and fatigue, though nature provides both means of rest and animal heat without them. The true gentleman in like manner carefully avoids

whatever may cause a jar or a jolt in the minds of those with whom he is cast—all clashing of opinion, or collision of feeling, all restraint, or suspicion, or gloom, or resentment; his great concern being to make everyone at their ease and at home.



He has his eyes on all his company; he is tender toward the bashful, gentle toward the distant, and merciful toward the absurd; he can recollect to whom he is speaking; he guards against unreasonable allusions, or topics which may irritate; he is seldom prominent in conversation, and never wearisome. He makes light of favors while he does them, and

seems to be receiving when he is conferring. He never speaks of himself except when compelled, never defends himself by a mere retort, he has no ears for slander or gossip, is scrupulous in imputing motives to those who interfere with him, and interprets everything for the best. He is never mean or little in his disputes, never takes unfair advantage, never mistakes personalities or sharp sayings for arguments, or insinuates evil which he dare not say out. From a long-sighted prudence, he observes the maxim of the ancient sage, that we should ever conduct ourselves toward our enemy as if he were one day to be our friend. He has too much good sense to be affronted at insults, he is too well employed to remember injuries, and too indolent to bear malice. He is patient, forbearing, and resigned, on philosophical principles; he submits to pain because it is inevitable, to bereavement because it is irreparable, and to death because it is his destiny. If he engages in controversy of any kind, his disciplined intellect preserves him from the blundering discourtesy of better, perhaps, but less educated minds, who, like blunt weapons, tear and hack, instead of cutting clean, who mistake the point in argument, waste their strength on trifles, misconceive their adversary, and leave the question more involved than they find it. He may be right or wrong in his opinion, but he is too clear-headed to be unjust; he is as

simple as he is forcible, and as brief as he is decisive. Nowhere shall we find greater candor, consideration, indulgence; he throws himself into the minds of his opponents, he accounts for their mistakes. He knows the weakness of human reason as well as its strength, its province and its limits. If he be an unbeliever, he will be too profound and large-minded to ridicule religion or to act against it; he is too wise to be a dogmatist or fanatic in his infidelity. He respects piety and devo-

tion; he even supports institutions as venerable, beautiful, or useful, to which he does not assent; he honors the ministers of religion, and it contents him to decline its mysteries without assailing or denouncing them. He is a friend of religious toleration, and that not only because his philosophy has taught him to look on all forms of faith with an impartial eye, but also from the gentleness and effeminacy of feeling which is the attendant on civilization.

Discussion

What is your opinion of the first sentence of the essay? Can you think of any exceptions to Newman's definition?

What was your idea of a gentleman before reading this essay? How has your idea been modified by reading this essay?

Pick out two or three gentlemanly characteristics that appeal particularly to you.

How would one go about developing the characteristics of a gentleman? Mention specific characteristics in your answer.

Point out some particularly effective examples of the balanced sentence. In what way do they add to the effectiveness of the essay?

Research

Because our relations with other people are extremely important, the many points Newman raises are worth serious thought. Perhaps it would be helpful both to yourself and to your classmates if you were to relate Newman's ideas to your own experience by writing an essay on "The Ideal Teen-ager."

For an interesting brief biography of Newman see Lytton Strachey's *Eminent Victorians*, under "Cardinal Manning." Plan an oral report to share your information with your classmates.

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY was born in Calcutta, India, where his father represented the East India Company. At six he was sent home to England. He attended Charter House School, where Addison and Steele had preceded him, and later Cambridge. He left the university without getting his degree. After traveling on the continent, he studied law briefly in London and then art in Paris.

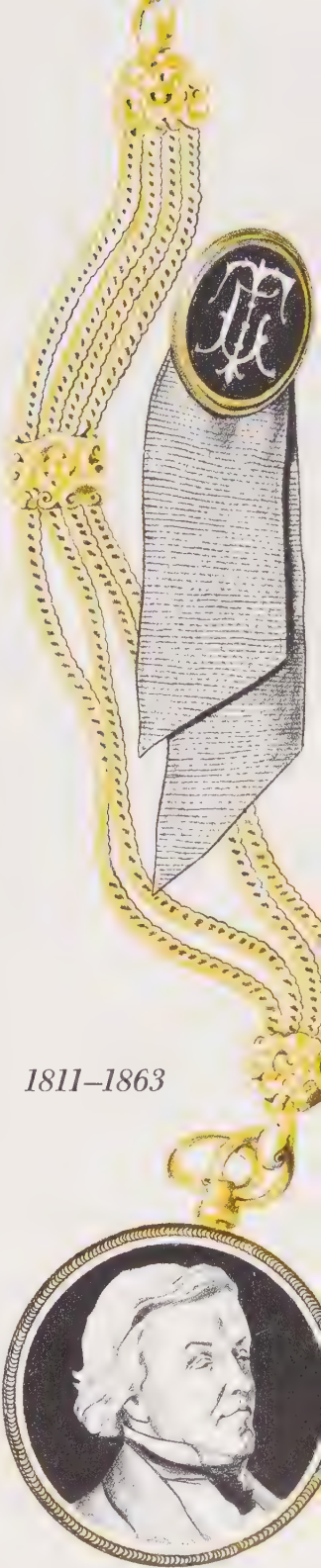
Thackeray married Isabella Shawe in 1836 and at the same time became Paris correspondent for several English newspapers. After a year of this he returned to London, where he supported his family by contributing to various magazines. In 1842, following the birth of their third daughter, his wife became incurably insane, and the children were sent to live with their grandparents in Paris. In spite of this unhappy turn of events, Thackeray managed to remain cheerful most of the time.

In 1842 Thackeray began to contribute to the humor magazine *Punch*, which had been established the year before. It was in *Punch* that his Snob series appeared. In 1848 the essays were collected and published as *The Book of Snobs*. The year before, his first great novel, *Vanity Fair*, appeared in monthly installments. The novel established firmly the fame that he had already earned with his essays. *Pendennis*, a partly autobiographical novel published in 1850, added further to his reputation.

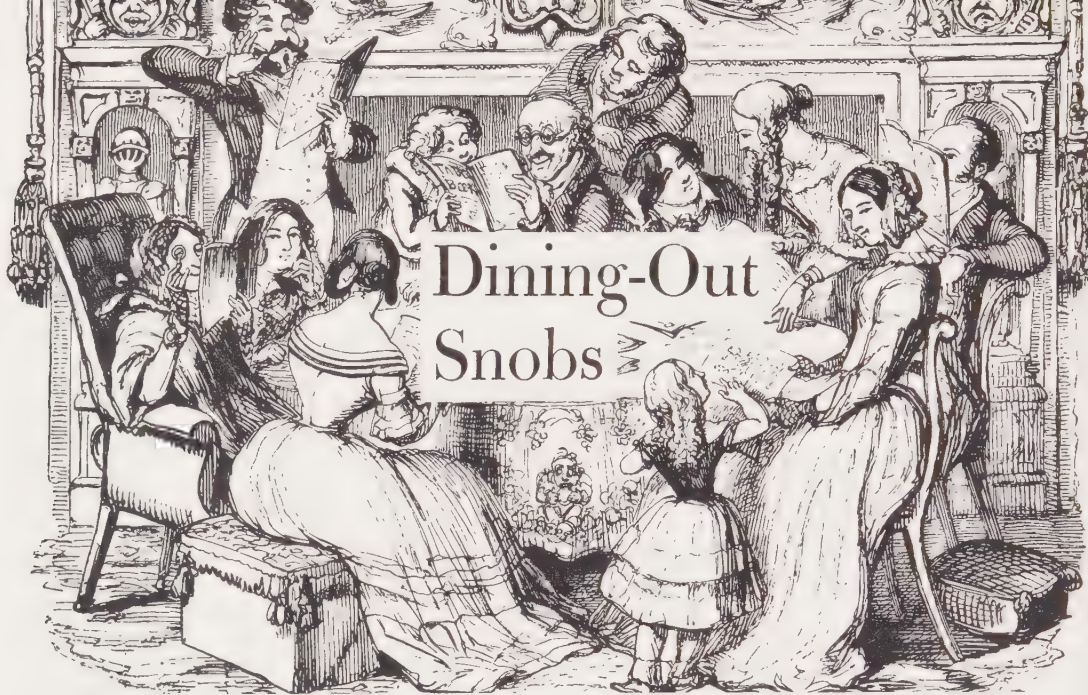
A lecture tour of the United States in 1852 increased both Thackeray's reputation and his income. He traveled from Boston as far south as Savannah. Three years later he again toured the United States, this time going as far south and west as New Orleans. In 1860 Thackeray became the first editor of the *Cornhill Magazine*, but two years later he had to retire because of poor health. He continued to write for the magazine until his sudden death in 1863. His wife, mother, and two daughters survived him.

Although Thackeray is best remembered for his novels, he was also a distinguished essayist. Among his best essays are *The English Humorists*, which grew out of the lectures on his first American tour. He was a master at dissecting the vanities and pretences of social life, though he attacked humbug wherever he found it. The motto he provided for *Punch* in the last of the Snob essays may be taken as his own: "May he laugh honestly, hit no foul blow, and tell the truth when at his very broadest grin—never forgetting that if Fun is good, Truth is still better, and Love best of all."

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY



1811–1863



Dining-Out Snobs

In England Dinner-giving Snobs occupy a very important place in society, and the task of describing them is tremendous. There was a time in my life when the consciousness of having eaten a man's salt¹ rendered me dumb regarding his demerits, and I thought it a wicked act and a breach of hospitality to speak ill of him.

But why should a saddle-of-mutton blind you, or a turbot and lobster-sauce shut your mouth for ever? With advancing age, men see their duties more clearly. I am not to be hood-winked any longer by a slice of venison, be it ever so fat; and as for being dumb on account of turbot and lobster-sauce—of course I am: good manners ordain that I should be so, until I have swallowed the compound—but not afterwards; directly the victuals are discussed, and

John takes away the plate, my tongue begins to wag. Does not yours, if you have a pleasant neighbour?—a lovely creature, say, of some five-and-thirty, whose daughters have not yet quite come out—they are the best talkers. As for your young misses, they are only put about the table to look at—like the flowers in the centre-piece. Their blushing youth and natural modesty preclude them from that easy, confidential, conversational *abandon* which forms the delight of the intercourse with their dear mothers. It is to these, if he would prosper in his profession, that the Dining-out Snob should address himself. Suppose you sit next to one of these, how

¹*having eaten a man's salt.* It is an ancient tradition among the Arabs that one who has partaken of another man's salt will do him no harm.

pleasant it is, in the intervals of the banquet, actually to abuse the vic-tuals and the giver of the entertain-ment! It's twice as *piquant* to make fun of a man under his very nose.

'What is a Dinner-giving Snob?' some innocent youth, who is not *répandu*² in the world, may ask—or some simple reader who has not the benefits of London experience.

My dear sir, I will show you—not all, for that is impossible—but sev-eral kinds of Dinner-giving Snobs. For instance, suppose you, in the middle rank of life, accustomed to Mutton, roast on Tuesday, cold on Wednesday, hashed on Thursday, &c., with small means and a small establishment, choose to waste the former and set the latter topsy-turvy by giving entertainments un-naturally costly—you come into the Dinner-giving Snob class at once. Suppose you get in cheap made-dishes from the pastrycook's, and hire a couple of greengrocers, or car-pet-beaters, to figure as footmen, dismissing honest Molly, who waits on common days, and bedizening your table (ordinarily ornamented with willow-pattern crockery) with twopenny-halfpenny Birmingham plate. Suppose you pretend to be richer and grander than you ought to be—you are a Dinner-giving Snob. And oh, I tremble to think how many and many a one will read this!

²*répandu*. One who has not gone out into society.

³*guttling*. Eating greedily.

A man who entertains in this way—and, alas, how few do not!—is like a fellow who would borrow his neighbour's coat to make a show in, or a lady who flaunts in the dia-monds from next door—a humbug, in a word, and amongst the Snobs he must be set down.

A man who goes out of his nat-ural sphere of society to ask Lords, Generals, Aldermen, and other per-sons of fashion, but is niggardly of his hospitality towards his own equals, is a Dinner-giving Snob. My dear friend, Jack Tufthunt, for example, knows *one* Lord whom he met at a watering-place: old Lord Mumble, who is as toothless as a three-months-old baby, and as mum as an undertaker, and as dull as—well, we will not particularise. Tufthunt never has a dinner now but you see this solemn old toothless patrician at the right-hand of Mrs. Tufthunt—Tufthunt is a Dinner-giving Snob.

Old Livermore, old Soy, old Chut-ney, the East Indian Director, old Cutler, the Surgeon, &c.,—that soci-ety of old fogies, in fine, who give each other dinners round and round, and dine for the mere purpose of guttling³—these, again, are Dinner-giving Snobs.

Again, my friend Lady Mac-Screw, who has three grenadier flunkies in lace round the table, and serves up a scrag-of-mutton on sil-ver, and dribbles you out bad sherry and port by thimblefuls is a Dinner-giving Snob of the other sort; and I

confess, for my part, I would rather dine with old Livermore or old Soy than with her Ladyship.

Stinginess is snobbish. Ostentation is snobbish. Too great profusion is snobbish. Tuft-hunting is snobbish. But I own there are people more snobbish than all those whose defects are above mentioned: viz., those individuals who can, and don't give dinners at all. The man without hospitality shall never sit *sub iisdem trabibus*⁴ with me. Let the sordid wretch go mumble his bone alone!

What, again, is true hospitality? Alas, my dear friends and brother Snobs! how little do we meet of it after all! Are the motives *pure* which induce your friends to ask you to dinner? This has often come across me. Does your entertainer want something from you? For instance, I am not of a suspicious turn: but it is a fact that when Hookey is bringing out a new work, he asks the critics all round to dinner; that when Walker had got his picture ready for the Exhibition, he somehow grows exceedingly hospitable, and has his friends of the press to a quiet cutlet and a glass of Sillery. Old Hunks, the miser, who died lately (leaving his money to his housekeeper) lived many years on the fat of the land, by simply taking down, at all his friends', the names and Christian names of *all the children*. But though you may have your own opinion about the hospitality of your acquaintances; and

though men who ask you from sordid motives are most decidedly Dinner-giving Snobs, it is best not to inquire into their motives too keenly. Be not too curious about the mouth of a gift-horse. After all, a man does not intend to insult you by asking you to dinner.

Though, for that matter, I know some characters about town who actually consider themselves injured and insulted if the dinner or the company is not to their liking. There is Guttleton, who dines at home off a shilling's-worth of beef from the cookshop; but if he is asked to dine at a house where there are not peas at the end of May, or cucumbers in March along with the turbot, thinks himself insulted by being invited. 'Good Ged!' says he, 'what the deuce do the Forkers mean by asking *me* to a family dinner? I can get mutton at home;' or, 'What infernal impertinence it is of the Spooners to get *entrées* from the pastrycook's, and fancy that *I* am to be deceived with their stories about their French cook!' Then, again, there is Jack Puddington—I saw that honest fellow t'other day quite in a rage, because, as chance would have it, Sir John Carver asked him to meet the very same party he had met at Colonel Cramley's the day before, and he had not got up a new set of stories to entertain them. Poor Dinner-giving Snobs! you don't know what

⁴*sub iisdem trabibus*. Under the same timbers; or, more loosely, at the same table.

small thanks you get for all your pains and money! How we Dining-out Snobs sneer at your cookery, and pooh-pooh your old hock, and are incredulous about your four-and-sixpenny champagne, and know that the side-dishes of to-day are *réchauffés*⁵ from the dinner of yesterday, and mark how certain dishes are whisked off the table untasted, so that they may figure at the banquet to-morrow. Whenever, for my part, I see the head man particularly

⁵*réchauffés*. Warmed up again.

⁶*escamoter*. To make away with.

anxious to *escamoter*⁶ a fricandeau or a blanc-manger, I always call out, and insist upon massacring it with a spoon. All this sort of conduct makes one popular with the Dinner-giving Snob. One friend of mine, I know, has made a prodigious sensation in good society, by announcing *à propos* of certain dishes when offered to him, that he never eats aspic except at Lord Tittup's, and that Lady Jiminy's *chef* is the only man in London who knows how to dress—*Filet en serpenteau*—or *Suprême de volaille aux truffes*.

Discussion

1. How does Thackeray define a Snob?

What distinction does he make between the Dinner-giving Snob and the Dining-out Snob?

How does Thackeray manage to make his satire sharp without being cruel? Point out statements in the essay which support your answer.

What does the essay tell us about social customs in Thackeray's day?

Thackeray liked to give the people he invented names that characterized them. Point out examples in the essay.

Research

1. There are many more Snobs left—in fact, a whole book of them. You will find it entertaining—and enlightening—to read one or more additional essays from *The Book of Snobs*. Plan a brief report on one, including the reading aloud of some choice sentences.
2. The class can have fun writing essays on School Snobs and exchanging papers or reading some of them aloud. Each student should limit his essay to some specific type of Snob, such as “Athletic Snobs,” “Social Snobs,” “Scholarly Snobs,” or “Bus Snobs.”

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON'S first venture into writing was in the field of the essay, and though it was his novels that earned him his greatest fame, it was his essays that won him his most devoted readers.

Like Hazlitt he ranged widely and reacted with enthusiasm to every new experience, whether he found it in life or in books. Stevenson was an optimist and an idealist. He looked upon the world and found it good.

Others might decry the younger generation (as indeed some have done in all ages), but not Stevenson. He wrote in "Crabbed Age and Youth," "Give me the young man who has brains enough to make a fool of himself. . . . Youth is the time to go flashing from one end of the world to the other both in mind and body; to try the manners of different nations; to hear the chimes at midnight, to see sunrise in town and country . . . write halting verses, run a mile to see a fire."

Stevenson's own life was a constant struggle against ill health. He contracted tuberculosis early in life and though at times changes of climate seemed to offer relief, the disease eventually brought on his death. Stevenson was born and brought up in Edinburgh, Scotland. He studied law but never practiced, having meanwhile discovered he liked to write. He liked to travel, too, and his first book was an account of a canoe trip through Belgium and France. It was in France he met the American Mrs. Osbourne, whom he later journeyed to California to marry. It was for her son he wrote the story that brought him fame, *Treasure Island*. Ever in search of health, Stevenson took his family to the South Seas. They settled on Samoa, and it was there Stevenson died and was buried. At forty-six he had already earned a place in English literature on the basis of any one of the types he tried: poetry, novel, essay, letters.

"Æs Triplex" is Latin and means "triple brass," a phrase the Roman poet Horace used to describe the stout hearts of early seafarers. The essay is from a volume which has a Latin title, too, *Virginibus Puerisque*, which means Girls and Boys. The volume was published in 1881. The last paragraph of the essay is a notable contribution to the world's literature of inspiration.

(For additional biographical material see page 54.)



ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

1850-1894

Æs Triplex



The changes wrought by death are in themselves so sharp and final, and so terrible and melancholy in their consequences, that the thing stands alone in man's experience, and has no parallel upon earth. It outdoes all other accidents because it is the last of them. Sometimes it leaps suddenly upon its victims, like a Thug; sometimes it lays a regular siege and creeps upon their citadel during a score of years. And when the business is done, there is sore havoc made in other people's lives, and a pin knocked out by which many subsidiary friendships hung together. There are empty chairs, solitary walks, and single beds at night. Again, in taking away our friends, death does not take them

away utterly, but leaves behind a mocking, tragical, and soon intolerable residue, which must be hurriedly concealed. Hence a whole chapter of sights and customs striking to the mind, from the pyramids of Egypt to the gibbets and dule trees¹ of mediæval Europe. The poorest persons have a bit of pageant going toward the tomb; memorial stones are set up over the least memorable; and, in order to preserve some show of respect for what remains of our old loves and friendships, we must accompany it with much grimly ludicrous ceremonial, and the hired undertaker parades before the door. All this, and much more of the same sort, accompanied by the eloquence of poets, has gone a great way to put humanity in error; nay, in many philosophies the error has been embodied and laid down

¹*dule trees.* Trees of sorrow, so-called because of their use as gallows.

with every circumstance of logic; although in real life the bustle and swiftness, in leaving people little time to think, have not left them time enough to go dangerously wrong in practice.

As a matter of fact, although few things are spoken of with more fearful whisperings than this prospect of death, few have less influence on conduct under healthy circumstances. We have all heard of cities in South America built upon the side of fiery mountains, and how, even in this tremendous neighborhood, the inhabitants are not a jot more impressed by the solemnity of mortal conditions than if they were delving gardens in the greenest corner of England. There are serenades and suppers and much gallantry among the myrtles overhead; and meanwhile the foundation shudders underfoot, the bowels of the mountain growl, and at any moment living ruin may leap sky-high into the moonlight, and tumble man and his merrymaking in the dust. In the eyes of very young people and very dull old ones there is something indescribably reckless and desperate in such a picture. It seems not credible that respectable married people, with umbrellas, should find appetite for a bit of supper within quite a long distance of a fiery mountain; ordinary life begins to smell of high-handed debauch when it is carried on so close to a catastrophe; and even cheese and salad, it seems, could hardly be relished in such cir-

cumstances without something like a defiance of the Creator. It should be a place for nobody but hermits dwelling in prayer and maceration, or mere born devils drowning care in a perpetual carouse.

And yet, when one comes to think upon it calmly, the situation of these South American citizens forms only a very pale figure for the state of ordinary mankind. This world itself, traveling blindly and swiftly in overcrowded space, among a million other worlds traveling blindly and swiftly in contrary directions, may very well come by a knock that would set it into explosion like a penny squib. And what, pathologically looked at, is the human body with all its organs, but a mere bagful of petards? The least of these is as dangerous to the whole economy as the ship's powder magazine to the ship; and with every breath we breathe, and every meal we eat, we are putting one more of them in peril. If we clung as devotedly as some philosophers pretend we do to the abstract idea of life, or were half as frightened as they make out we are, for the subversive accident that ends it all, the trumpets might sound by the hour and no one would follow them into battle. Think (if these philosophers were right) with what a preparation of spirit we should affront the daily peril of the dinner table: a deadlier spot than any battlefield in history, where the far greater proportion of our ancestors have misera-



bly left their bones! What woman would ever be lured into marriage, so much more dangerous than the wildest sea? And what would it be to grow old? For, after a certain distance, every step we take in life we find the ice growing thinner below our feet, and all around us and behind us we see our contemporaries going through. By the time a man gets well into the seventies, his continued existence is a mere miracle; and when he lays his old bones in bed for the night, there is an overwhelming probability that he will never see the day. Do the old men mind it, as a matter of fact? Why, no. They were never merrier; they have their grog at night, and tell the

raciest stories; they hear of the death of people about their own age, or even younger, not as if it was a grisly warning, but with a simple childlike pleasure at having outlived someone else; and when a draft might puff them out like a guttering candle, or a bit of a stumble shatter them like so much glass, their old hearts keep sound and unaffrighted, and they go on, bubbling with laughter, through years of man's age compared to which the valley at Balaclava² was as safe and peaceful as a village cricket green on Sunday. It may fairly be questioned (if we look to the peril only) whether it was a much more daring feat for Curtius³ to plunge into the gulf, than for any old gentleman of ninety to doff his clothes and clamber into bed.

Indeed, it is a memorable subject for consideration, with what unconcern and gayety mankind pricks on

²*Balaclava*. This seaport in southern Russia was the scene of the charge of the Light Brigade, immortalized in Tennyson's poem.

³*Curtius*. According to legend when an earthquake opened a chasm in Rome Marcus Curtius sacrificed himself to appease the gods.

along the Valley of the Shadow of Death. The whole way is one wilderness of snares, and the end of it, for those who fear the last pinch, is irrevocable ruin. And yet we go spinning through it all, like a party for the Derby. Perhaps the reader remembers one of the humorous devices of the deified Caligula⁴: how he encouraged a vast concourse of holiday-makers on to his bridge over Baiæ bay; and when they were in the height of their enjoyment, turned loose the Prætorian Guards among the company and had them tossed into the sea. This is no bad miniature of the dealings of nature with the transitory race of man. Only, what a checkered picnic we have of it, even while it lasts! and into what great waters, not to be crossed by any swimmer, God's pale Prætorian throws us over in the end!

We live the time that a match flickers; we pop the cork of a ginger-beer bottle, and the earthquake swallows us on the instant. Is it not odd, is it not incongruous, is it not, in the highest sense of human speech, incredible, that we should think so highly of the ginger beer and regard so little the devouring earthquake? The love of Life and the fear of Death are two famous phrases that grow harder to understand the more we think about them. It is a well-known fact that an immense proportion of boat accidents would never happen if people held the sheet in their hands instead of making it fast; and yet, unless it be

some martinet of a professional mariner or some landsman with shattered nerves, every one of God's creatures makes it fast. A strange instance of man's unconcern and brazen boldness in the face of death!

We confound ourselves with metaphysical phrases, which we import into daily talk with noble inappropriateness. We have no idea of what death is, apart from its circumstances and some of its consequences to others; and although we have some experience of living, there is not a man on earth who has flown so high into abstraction as to have any practical guess at the meaning of the word "life." All literature, from Job and Omar Khayyâm to Thomas Carlyle or Walt Whitman, is but an attempt to look upon the human state with such largeness of view as shall enable us to rise from the consideration of living to the Definition of Life. And our sages give us about the best satisfaction in their power when they say that it is a vapor, or a show, or made out of the same stuff with dreams. Philosophy, in its more rigid sense, has been at the same work for ages; and after a myriad bald heads have wagged over the problem, and piles of words have been heaped one upon another into dry and cloudy volumes without end, philosophy has the honor of laying before us, with modest pride, her contribution toward

⁴*Caligula*. Caligula was a Roman Emperor. His brief reign (37-41 A.D.) was a nightmare of cruelty and insanity.

the subject: that life is a Permanent Possibility of Sensation. Truly a fine result! A man may very well love beef, or hunting, or a woman; but surely, surely, not a Permanent Possibility of Sensation! He may be afraid of a precipice, or a dentist, or a large enemy with a club, or even an undertaker's man; but not certainly of abstract death. We may trick with the word "life" in its dozen senses until we are weary of tricking; we may argue in terms of all the philosophies on earth, but one fact remains true throughout—that we do not love life, in the sense that we are greatly preoccupied about its conservation; that we do not, properly speaking, love life at all, but living. Into the views of the least careful there will enter some degree of providence; no man's eyes are fixed entirely on the passing hour; but although we have some anticipation of good health, good weather, wine, active employment, love, and self-approval, the sum of these anticipations does not amount to anything like a general view of life's possibilities and issues; nor are those who cherish them most vividly, at all the most scrupulous of their personal safety. To be deeply interested in the accidents of our existence, to enjoy keenly the mixed texture of hu-

man experience, rather leads a man to disregard precautions, and risk his neck against a straw. For surely the love of living is stronger in an Alpine climber roping over a peril, or a hunter riding merrily at a stiff fence, than in a creature who lives upon a diet and walks a measured distance in the interest of his constitution.

There is a great deal of very vile nonsense talked upon both sides of the matter: tearing divines reducing life to the dimensions of a mere funeral procession, so short as to be hardly decent; and melancholy unbelievers yearning for the tomb as if it were a world too far away. Both sides must feel a little ashamed of their performances now and again when they draw in their chairs to dinner. Indeed, a good meal and a bottle of wine is an answer to most standard works upon the question. When a man's heart warms to his viands, he forgets a great deal of sophistry, and soars into a rosy zone of contemplation. Death may be knocking at the door, like the Commander's statue;⁵ we have something else in hand, thank God, and let him knock. Passing bells are ringing all the world over. All the world over, and every hour, some one is parting company with all his aches and ecstasies. For us also the trap is laid. But we are so fond of life that we have no leisure to entertain the terror of death. It is a honeymoon with us all through, and none of the longest. Small blame to us if we

⁵*the Commander's statue.* Don Juan, a fourteenth-century Spaniard, killed the commandant of Ulloa after seducing his daughter. When in turn Don Juan was killed by some monks, they gave out the story that he had been carried off to hell by a statue of the commandant in the monastery grounds.

give our whole hearts to this glowing bride of ours, to the appetites, to honor, to the hungry curiosity of the mind, to the pleasure of the eyes in nature, and the pride of our own nimble bodies.

We all of us appreciate the sensations; but as for caring about the Permanence of the Possibility, a man's head is generally very bald, and his senses very dull, before he comes to that. Whether we regard life as a lane leading to a dead wall—a mere bag's end, as the French say—or whether we think of it as a vestibule or gymnasium, where we wait our turn and prepare our faculties for some more noble destiny; whether we thunder in a pulpit, or pule in little atheistic poetry books, about its vanity and brevity; whether we look justly for years of health and vigor, or are about to mount into a bath chair,⁶ as a step toward the hearse; in each and all of these views and situations there is but one conclusion possible: that a man should stop his ears against paralyzing terror, and run the race that is set before him with a single mind. No one surely could have recoiled with more heartache and terror from the thought of death than our respected lexicographer;⁷ and yet we know how little it affected his conduct, how wisely and boldly he walked, and in what a fresh and lively vein he spoke of life. Already an old man, he ventured on his Highland tour; and his heart, bound with triple brass, did not recoil before twenty-

seven individual cups of tea. As courage and intelligence are the two qualities best worth a good man's cultivation, so it is the first part of intelligence to recognize our precarious estate in life, and the first part of courage to be not at all abashed before the fact. A frank and somewhat headlong carriage, not looking too anxiously before, not dallying in maudlin regret over the past, stamps the man who is well armored for this world.

And not only well armored for himself, but a good friend and a good citizen to boot. We do not go to cowards for tender dealing; there is nothing so cruel as panic; the man who has least fear for his own carcass has most time to consider others. That eminent chemist who took his walks abroad in tin shoes and subsisted wholly upon tepid milk had all his work cut out for him in considerate dealings with his own digestion. So soon as prudence has begun to grow up in the brain, like a dismal fungus, it finds its first expression in a paralysis of generous acts. The victim begins to shrink spiritually; he develops a fancy for parlors with a regulated temperature, and takes his morality on the principle of tin shoes and tepid milk.

⁶*bath chair*. The name derives from Bath, an English health resort, where invalids were conveyed to the mineral springs in a type of wheelchair.

⁷*lexicographer*. Samuel Johnson (1709–1784). For a biographical sketch of Johnson see page 158.



The care of one important body or soul becomes so engrossing that all the noises of the outer world begin to come thin and faint into the parlor with the regulated temperature; and the tin shoes go equally forward over blood and rain. To be overwise is to ossify; and the scruplemonger ends by standing stockstill. Now the man who has his heart on his sleeve, and a good whirling weathercock of a brain, who reckons his life as a thing to be dashingly used and cheerfully hazarded, makes

a very different acquaintance of the world, keeps all his pulses going true and fast, and gathers impetus as he runs, until, if he be running toward anything better than wildfire, he may shoot up and become a constellation in the end. Lord look after his health, Lord have a care of his soul, says he; and he has at the key of the position, and swashes through incongruity and peril toward his aim. Death is on all sides of all of us; unfortunate surprises gird him round; mimmouthed friends and

relations hold up their hands in quite a little elegiacal synod about his path: and what cares he for all this? Being a true lover of living, a fellow with something pushing and spontaneous in his inside, he must, like any other soldier, in any other stirring, deadly warfare, push on at his best pace until he touch the goal. "A peerage or Westminster Abbey!" cried Nelson⁸ in his bright, boyish, heroic manner. These are great incentives; not for any of these, but for the plain satisfaction of living, of being about their business in some sort or other, do the brave, serviceable men of every nation tread down the nettle danger, and pass flyingly over all the stumbling-blocks of prudence. Think of the heroism of Johnson, think of that superb indifference to mortal limitation that set him upon his dictionary, and carried him through triumphantly until the end! Who, if he were wisely considerate of things at large, would ever embark upon any work much more considerable than a halfpenny post card? Who would project a serial novel, after Thackeray and Dickens⁹ had each fallen in mid-course? Who would find heart enough to begin to live, if he dallied with the consideration of death?

And, after all, what sorry and pitiful quibbling all this is! To forego all the issues of living in a parlor with a regulated temperature—as if that were not to die a hundred times over, and for ten years at a stretch! As if it were not to die in one's own

lifetime, and without even the sad immunities of death! As if it were not to die, and yet be the patient spectators of our own pitiable change! The Permanent Possibility is preserved, but the sensations carefully held at arm's length, as if one kept a photographic plate in a dark chamber. It is better to lose health like a spendthrift than to waste it like a miser. It is better to live and be done with it, than to die daily in the sickroom. By all means begin your folio; even if the doctor does not give you a year, even if he hesitates about a month, make one brave push and see what can be accomplished in a week. It is not only in finished undertakings that we ought to honor useful labor. A spirit goes out of the man who means execution, which outlives the most untimely ending. All who have meant good work with their whole hearts, have done good work, although they may die before they have the time to sign it. Every heart that has beat strong and cheerfully has left a hopeful impulse behind it in the world, and bettered the tradition of mankind. And even if death catch people, like an open pitfall, and in mid-career, laying out vast projects, and planning monstrous foundations, flushed with hope, and their mouths

⁸Nelson. Horatio Nelson (1758-1805), a great English naval hero, made the declaration at the Battle of the Nile. He got the peerage. (See painting, page 277, of his great victory at Trafalgar.)

⁹Thackeray and Dickens. Both these writers left unfinished novels at death. Stevenson later did the same.

full of boastful language; they should be at once tripped up and silenced: is there not something brave and spirited in such a termination? and does not life go down with a better grace, foaming in full body over a precipice, than miserably straggling to an end in sandy deltas? When the Greeks made their fine saying that those whom the gods love die young, I cannot help believing they had this sort of death also in their eye. For surely,

at whatever age it overtake the man, this is to die young. Death has not been suffered to take so much as an illusion from his heart. In the hot-fit of life, a-tiptoe on the highest point of being, he passes at a bound on to the other side. The noise of the mallet and chisel is scarcely quenched, the trumpets are hardly done blowing, when, trailing with him clouds of glory, this happy-starred, full-blooded spirit shoots into the spiritual land.

Discussion

1. What threats to human existence does Stevenson mention? Have any been added since his day? Why, according to Stevenson, do men “cheerfully disregard” these threats?
2. What does Stevenson consider the proper attitude toward life?
3. Does our knowledge of Stevenson’s poor health add anything to our appreciation of this essay?
4. Can you think of any reason why Stevenson chose a Latin phrase for the title of this essay?
5. Point out several phrases or sentences in the essay that you think are worth remembering.

Research

1. If you found this essay stimulating, you will want to extend your acquaintance with Stevenson. Other essays you may enjoy include “An Apology for Idlers,” “Crabbed Age and Youth,” and “El Dorado.”
2. If you have not already read Stevenson’s short story “Markheim,” do so now. (See page 55.) Does the man who wrote “Æs Triplex” seem to be the same man who wrote “Markheim”?
3. Most young readers find “Æs Triplex” thought-provoking. You will find it worthwhile to organize your own ideas in an essay on life, or death, or both.



POETRY



Shelley called poetry "the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds." Poetry has also been described as the concrete and artistic expression of the human mind in emotional and rhythmical language. Or to put it still another way, poetry, through the medium of language, fuses the actual with the spiritual. It might be added that most readers, if not all poets, concur in Coleridge's dictum that, "Poetry is certainly something more than good sense, but it must be good sense at all events."

The form poetry takes varies in different literatures. In English literature poetry has been characterized by a pattern of stressed syllables from earliest times. As we shall see, the simple pattern of four stresses to a line of Anglo-Saxon poetry has expanded over the centuries to a fairly complex system of metrics.

English poetry, to the best of our knowledge, had its beginning about the seventh century. In its earliest form it was apparently narrative and ranked third in entertainment to eating and drinking. Life in early-day Britain was dangerous, and fighting was necessary and commonplace. Small groups of men banded together around a chieftain for mutual advantage and protection. In the evenings, at least on special occasions, the men would gather in the chieftain's hall for feasting. Perhaps at first the only verbal entertainment was such as the men themselves provided with accounts of their adventures and boasting of their prowess.

Some men would tell stories better than others. Perhaps someone less

able in battle than his fellows, or too aged, would cultivate his storytelling skill, and so in time become "professional." In the very oldest surviving records we find mention of *scops*, as poets were called in Old English. They related the deeds of their contemporaries and perhaps embellished them with incidents from older tales, which had grown more wonderful with time, as stories will. The stories were oral, of course, and it was not until they had undergone years of repetition and "improvement" that they were put into writing. What is no doubt one of the best of these battle narratives, *Beowulf*, has miraculously come down to us almost intact.

There are fragments surviving of other stories, some religious poems, and a few lyrics. The first Christian poet of England that we have any record of is Caedmon, who, some time in the latter half of the seventh century, turned portions of the Old Testament into verse. We know of Caedmon through a passage in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* (see page 138). From the quality of the surviving fragments of Old English poetry we can reasonably conclude that there must at one time have been a body of poetic literature of considerable extent and variety.

The decisive defeat of the Anglo-Saxons by the Normans under William the Conqueror in 1066 brought a strong influence to bear upon not only Anglo-Saxon poetry, but the very language in which it had been written. The conquerors and those who wanted to get along with them spoke French, and Anglo-Saxon came to be considered fit only for serfs and peasants, a situation which Scott describes delightfully in the early chapters of *Ivanhoe*.

The French conquerors brought with them their own literature, notably that cousin of Anglo-Saxon narrative poetry, the metrical romance. Sung or recited by minstrels, the metrical romances had flourished in France for several centuries when they began to be heard in England. Much like the later narrative poems of Scott, these verse-romances were stories of knights and ladies—generally knights who engaged in daring deeds to serve or merely to reflect honor upon their lady loves. The popularity of the romances did much to establish the chivalric conventions of honor and duty and worshipful love.

When in the thirteenth century English again became the language of literature, it had been so extensively infiltrated by French that it was no longer recognizable as the language of *Beowulf*. The poetry which now began to be written in Britain showed no kinship to Anglo-Saxon poetry, which had to a great extent become unintelligible.

Around the year 1200 an English poet named Layamon, who was familiar with the French metrical romances based on the Arthurian legends, wrote the first English poem on this subject. He called his poem *Brut*, probably because he begins his story with Brutus, the legendary great-grandson of Aeneas and the founder of Britain. In the years that followed, many others used the Arthurian materials. One of the best of the early romances to survive is an alliterative poem titled "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight," composed in the fourteenth century.

Not all English poetry of the thirteenth century was narrative, as witness this nature lyric which has survived:

Sumer is icumen in,
Lhude sing cuccu!
Groweth sed, and bloweth med,
And springth the wude nu,
Sing cuccu.

English poetry, it is obvious, was no longer the somber medium that it had been before the Norman Conquest.

The interchange of Anglo-Saxon and French poetical ideas brought not only a lighter tone to English poetry but also important changes in verse form. Fixed meter and rhyme replaced the accents and alliteration of Anglo-Saxon poetry. Although alliteration disappeared as a regular verse pattern, it still survives today as an occasional decorative device.

The poet who first made full use of the enriched language and the new verse forms was Geoffrey Chaucer (1340-1400). The Renaissance, or "New Birth," was sweeping Italy in the fourteenth century, but its full effect did not reach England for a hundred years. Chaucer was the first Englishman to react to the Renaissance and the first English poet to turn his back on the Middle Ages. In his masterpiece, *The Canterbury Tales*, Chaucer broke loose from the conventional restrictions of the metrical romance to create a genuinely English poem, which established at once the suitability of actual life as the subject matter of poetry. In verse form Chaucer introduced the heroic couplet and invented the rhyme royal. In his shorter poems he experimented with a variety of forms, as if to show the possibilities of the English language.

Chaucer's uniqueness is emphasized by the contrast between his poetry and that of his contemporaries, John Gower and William Langland. Gower's *Confessio*

Amantis is, in spite of its Latin title, an English poem. Like *The Canterbury Tales*, it is a collection of stories, but the stories are "improving" rather than entertaining. They lack the "common touch" and zest for life so conspicuous in Chaucer's work. Langland's *Vision Concerning Piers the Plowman* is medieval in its involved allegory and is written in the dying Anglo-Saxon verse form. It looks toward the future, however, in its stress on the equality of men and the dignity of labor.

The fifteenth century is distinguished by no great poet. The poetic impulse instead found outlet in the anonymous poetry of the ballad. The ballads were composed for the ear of the common people, apparently without any conscious artistic purpose. As an oral literature, many ballads have no doubt been lost. We have a generous sample, however; over three hundred ballads in thirteen hundred versions survived to be written down in later centuries.

Contemporary with the ballads were many of the Christmas carols still loved today. The period also produced simple ballad plays, Christmas plays, and the more pretentious morality plays. Hardy, in *The Return of the Native*, describes the survival in a rural area of *Saint George*, one of the old Christmas plays, in which the characters speak in heroic couplets. Among the morality plays one of the most popular and also one of the best was *Everyman*, a play of Dutch origin.

A prose work of the fifteenth century that is poetic in its elevation of tone and splendor of imagination is Sir Thomas Malory's *Morte d'Arthur* (see page 5).

During the reigns of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I the influence of the Renaissance struck England full force and provided great stimulus to English intellectual life. Courtiers at the royal court (and even Henry and Elizabeth) considered it an accomplishment to write poems, which they circulated in manuscript form. Most notable of the poets in the pre-Elizabethan period were Sir Thomas Wyatt and the Earl of Surrey. They introduced into English literature the sonnet, which had been invented in Italy three hundred years before. Surrey made the innovation of ending the sonnet with a couplet, a device Shakespeare later copied. *Tottel's Miscellany*, published in 1557, brought the new court poetry into print for the first time and led to other volumes being published.

Sonnet sequences, usually addressed to a real or imaginary woman, were popular all through the Elizabethan period. Sir Philip Sidney brought the sonnet sequence to a high point of perfection in his *Astrophel and Stella* sequence, and Edmund Spenser wrote the notable *Amoretti* series. Shakespeare published his series of 154 sonnets in 1609. One may guess that Shakespeare considered his sonnets finer poetry than his plays. At any rate he saw to it that the sonnets were published, whereas he didn't even bother to keep copies of his plays. Aside from the sonnets, the best Elizabethan lyrics are the songs found in the works of the dramatists, most notably Shakespeare and Ben Jonson.

Shakespeare, of course, was the greatest poet as well as the greatest dramatist of the age. Indeed, in the words of Ben Jonson, "He was not of an age, but for all time." The plays for the most part are in blank verse. The ear-



lier plays suffer from the monotony of end-stopped lines, but by the time Shakespeare was writing *Macbeth*, the lines flowed naturally from the character who was speaking.

In non-dramatic poetry Edmund Spenser is the best representative of the Elizabethan period. Because of his skill in achieving harmonious combinations of sound and because of his purposely ornate style he has been called the poet's poet. His most famous work is his allegorical romance, *The Faerie Queene*, published in 1590-1596. In choosing for his central characters the shepherd and the knight, he adopted heroes of two widely popular literary forms, the pastoral and the romance. A high moral purpose underlies Spenser's work. Like the later Keats, his ideals were beauty, goodness, and truth.

Ben Jonson's work represents a transition between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Like Shakespeare, Jonson was primarily a dramatist, but unlike Shakespeare, he thought of his plays as literature. Jonson was concerned with the form of his plays and composed them with high literary standards in mind. Because of his influence on younger writers, who banded themselves together as "Sons of Ben," the first third of the seventeenth century is sometimes called the Age of Ben Jonson. Although Jonson's output of poetry was limited, such lyrics as "To Celia" and his tribute to Shakespeare entitle him to a respected place in the history of English poetry. As already indicated in Jonson's stress on form, the youthful freshness and zest of Elizabethan times gave way in the

seventeenth century to a more mature restraint and concern for technical perfection.

The seventeenth century was to be marked by a division in poetry as it was in politics, with the carefree and worldly court of Charles I on the one hand and the earnestly religious but intolerant Puritans on the other. Even before the Puritan revolution there were two schools of poets. A group, often called the Cavalier Poets, wrote mostly in a light, rather cynical vein about love and honor and the more frivolous aspects of court life. In this group are Wither, Herrick, Carew, Suckling, Lovelace, and Waller. The more serious group, called the Sacred Poets or the Metaphysical Poets, sought to get "beyond nature" into the realm of theoretical philosophy. Among these poets the leaders were Donne, Herbert, Crashaw, and Vaughan.

Belonging to no school but magnificently unique was the young Milton, whose "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" belong to the pre-Puritan period.

The Puritan Revolution of 1642 had a strangling effect on literature. Anything that could remotely be considered amusement was condemned, and the theaters were closed. Even the great Milton put aside poetry to write tracts, and soon, as Latin Secretary, was handling the government correspondence with other nations. He did not, however, forget his youthful desire to write a truly sublime poem. After almost twenty years of doing what he considered his patriotic duty, Milton set to work on what was to be his masterpiece, *Paradise Lost*, with its exalted purpose to "justify the ways of God to man." The epic is in blank verse, with which Milton combined the

periodic sentence to give his verse a sonorous quality never before achieved. Two centuries later, impressed with the majesty of the poetry of *Paradise Lost*, Tennyson called Milton the "God-gifted organ-voice of England."

After mature deliberation, Milton, who had not scorned rhyme in his youth, chose to write his masterpiece in blank verse. In his preface to *Paradise Lost* he wrote that rhyme was "no necessary adjunct or true ornament to poem or good verse,—but the invention of a barbarous age, to set off wretched matter and lame meter."

As a reaction to the strenuous idealism of Puritanism, the Restoration of 1660 brought a narrow realism. As if to make up for lost time, people sought to exploit to the full the pleasures of the immediate moment. The Restoration also again brought in French influence, with its devotion to the classics and its emphasis on polish.

The leading poet of the Restoration period was John Dryden. He achieved great popularity with his political satires in rhymed couplets, and in 1670 he was made Poet Laureate. As Dryden reduced the unit of poetry to the couplet, so in prose he shortened the sentence and made of it a clear and simple unit of thought. English prose writers since have been able to do little to improve upon it. Although Dryden wrote a great many plays for the re-opened theaters, his real power as a poet lay in satire, a type of literature in which he shares honors only with Pope.

Like the latter part of the seventeenth century, the early eighteenth century was a period of conservatism. The important thing, people felt, was to stabilize society and make the coun-

try safe for prosperity. Everything—including literature—was weighed and measured, and standards were set up. Prose, considered then, as today, more “practical” than poetry, developed rapidly. It was this period that saw the rise of the novel. (See page 520.)

In poetry, structure and style were considered more important than inspiration and originality. Pope was speaking for the age as well as for himself when he said,

“True wit is nature to advantage
dressed,
What oft was thought but ne’er so well
expressed.”

It must be admitted Pope was a master at this sort of thing. It is another indication of the classical interests of the age that Pope’s translations of the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad* made him rich.

Pope’s death in 1744 is sometimes given as the date of the end of classicism. This is only an approximation. In English literature, the Greek and Roman authors were used as models from the Restoration until near the close of the eighteenth century.

A coming change was casting its shadow, however. As early as 1730 James Thomson published a poem, *The Seasons*, which signaled a return to the long-neglected subject of nature. During the height of classicism, nature, where it figured in poetry at all, was merely background. It was now increasingly to become a subject worthy of consideration for its own sake. With interest in nature came discovery of the man close to nature in his everyday life, the humble farmer. Real peasants replaced the glamorized shepherds of the pastoral poems. Interest in the “simple annals of the poor” appears in the poetry successively of

Gray, Goldsmith, and Burns. Burns, closer to the soil than either Goldsmith or Gray, found nature in sympathy with man’s own emotions. In the works of all three poets satire gave place to sentiment, and poetry achieved spiritual depths never plumbed by Pope. Goldsmith, it is true, still wrote in heroic couplets, but Gray and Burns broke away.

It is necessary to bear in mind, however, that these poets were “rebels” of the day. Dr. Johnson was still enthroned as literary dictator, and Johnson’s views were stanchly classical. His own poems were patterned on the works of Latin poets, and he believed with the Romans that literature should serve a “moral” purpose. Johnson went so far as to hope that his *Lives of the Poets*, published in 1777-1781, were “written in such a manner as may tend to the promotion of piety.”

Gray, Goldsmith, and Burns had plowed the ground. The early nineteenth century was to reap a bountiful harvest of romanticism. Romanticism is essentially individualistic. It represents man’s attempt to escape from the pressures and tensions of the social order. The escape may take either or both of two directions: nature and the imagination. The return to nature represents a sort of flight from the city. Escape through imagination can go either backward or forward in time. Translated into literature, this may mean the historical novel on the one hand or the new Utopia and science-fiction on the other. Romantic literature emphasizes the individual and his emotions. It exalts feeling over reason. Romantic literature shows aspiration and enthusiasm; it suggests rather than defines.



English literature has, as a whole, been prevailingly romantic. Although under the spell of classicism from Jonson to Johnson, it returned in the nineteenth century to a spirit akin to the Elizabethan. The new romantics were Scott, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, and Keats.

Scott began his writing career as a poet, and his three metrical tales, *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, *Marmion*, and *The Lady of the Lake*, won for him the widest audience any poet had yet enjoyed. The poems did much, too, to popularize the romantic outlook. When Scott began to feel the competition of Byron, who published the first two cantos of *Childe Harold* in 1812, he turned to prose fiction and gave the historical novel an impetus it seems never to have lost.

Meanwhile Coleridge was turning to the past in a different way. His *An-*

cient Mariner, written in ballad stanzas, although not an imitation of medieval poetry, is full of the supernatural incidents which abound in medieval poetry.

Wordsworth turned to nature and found beauty not only in village and countryside, as Gray and Burns had done, but also in the wilder scenery of lakes and mountains. Byron was inspired by the majesty of the "deep and dark blue ocean," and Shelley sought the meaning of life in wind and clouds.

All the poets championed the ideal of brotherhood. Coleridge actually planned a Utopian society in the wilds of America, and Wordsworth and Byron were inspired by the slogan of the French Revolution, "Liberty, equality, fraternity," and became champions of the new democracy stirring in the world. Byron, indeed, gave his life in the struggle for Greek independence.

It was an age of new verse forms, too. Meters and stanza forms of every type were tried—and handled with skill. The Romantics exhausted the possibilities of English poetry both literally and figuratively. Twenty years were to pass between the death of Shelley in 1822 and the first full-dress appearance of the next major poet, Alfred Tennyson.

The Victorian Age was an age of commercial prosperity and the materialism that usually goes with prosperity. It was an age of social change, prosperity for the first time bringing the great middle class into power. Election and tax laws were modernized, and education was made available to everyone. Science made important discoveries, many of them of practical value, many of them disturbing to settled beliefs. Finally, it is important to note that it was a highly proper age, modeling itself on the strict life of the royal court.

The literature of the Victorian age

was chiefly prose, as befitted an age that set great value on facts. The realistic novel flourished, and the short story made its appearance. However, with schools supplying a rapidly increasing audience for writers, there were readers for poetry as well as prose. As social interests expanded, poetry as well as prose responded. Tennyson, the most popular poet of the age,

“dipt into the future, far as human
eye could see,

Saw the Vision of the world, and all the
wonder that would be.”

Although poetry thus expressed the new outlook, the romantic traditions lived on. Tennyson harked back to the Arthurian legends for his immensely popular *Idylls*; Browning explored the richly colorful life of Renaissance Italy; and Kipling became the champion of the unappreciated British soldier and the humbler citizens of the “far-flung” Empire. They and lesser Victorian poets

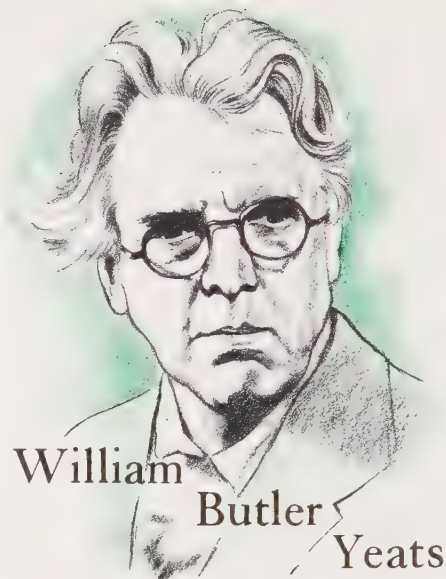


developed new types of poetry and revealed a new richness of imagination.

The two poets of the first rank in the Victorian period were Tennyson and Browning. More typical of the two was Tennyson, who shared with his age its doubts and defeats, faith and aspiration. For himself and his readers Tennyson was able to reconcile scientific questioning with religious belief. He re-interpreted stories of the legendary hero, King Arthur, and gave him contemporary meaning. Tennyson was more than an interpreter, however. He had a keen sense of rhythm and a gift for minting memorable phrases. He had also rare descriptive powers, and his poems are filled with beautiful figures of speech drawn from nature.

Browning, like Chaucer, was interested in people—all kinds of people, the ignoble as well as the noble. Like Chaucer, too, he was not looking for abstract truth but sought to depict the whole of life. The individual, not society, was important to Browning. He was the psychologist of the emotions. As he saw it, the goal of life was love—here and hereafter. Browning was basically optimistic, and his poems reflect the qualities he admired: joy in life, faith in the inherent goodness of the universe, and courage. Interestingly enough, the poetry of Browning's wife, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, was during her lifetime rated more highly than that of her husband. When recognition finally came to Browning, it was enthusiastic almost to the point of idolatry. He lived to see Browning Clubs established both in England and the United States.

One of the interesting sidelights of the Victorian period was the Pre-Raphaelite movement, led by Dante



Gabriel Rossetti and his sister Christina. The Rossettis sought to recapture the sincerity and spiritual truth they felt was reflected in the work of artists before Raphael. Most notable poem to come out of the movement was Rossetti's "The Blessed Damozel." Rossetti was a painter, and, not unnaturally, his poetry is marked by great visual beauty.

Another sidelight of the late nineteenth century was the Celtic Revival. Under the leadership of William Butler Yeats, there was a movement to stimulate interest in the ancient literature of Ireland and to create a new native literature. Yeats' first volume, *The Wanderings of Oisín*, published in 1889, was a collection of romantic poems based on Irish mythology. Other volumes followed, all of them characterized by mysticism and symbolism. Yeats received the Nobel Prize in 1923, and by the time of his death in 1939 his poetry had established him as the greatest Irish poet of modern times.

The faith of Tennyson and Browning in the ultimate goodness of life was

not shared by Algernon Charles Swinburne. Swinburne drew his inspiration from pagan philosophies of self-indulgence and pessimism. Whatever its morals, Swinburne's poetry is highly musical. Another poet who found flaws in the typically Victorian optimism was A. E. Housman, whose *A Shropshire Lad* was published in 1896. Housman was a classical scholar and wrote in the traditional forms, as did Robert Bridges, Poet Laureate from 1913 until his death in 1930.

The man who did most to set English poetry on a modern track was William E. Henley. He felt that English poetry was becoming anemic and needed a transfusion of good red blood. Like Kipling, and later Masfield, Henley felt that poetry should be virile and should interpret modern life in modern language. As early as 1874 Henley had written a series of verse sketches realistically describing his long stay in a hospital. Later, as editor of the *National Observer*, Henley published the *Barrack-Room Ballads* of the then unknown Kipling. In spite of his influence in his own day, Henley is remembered today chiefly for his brave poem, "Invictus."

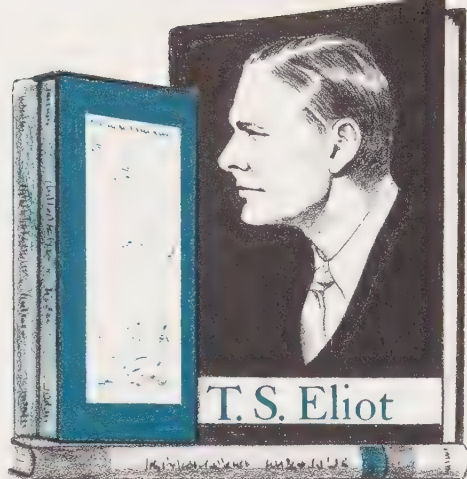
Once having obtained a hearing, Kipling quickly became popular. From his spirited accounts of army life in India he went on to larger themes. He contributed much to the spirit of imperialism, enlarging the concept of national patriotism to one of Anglo-Saxon unity. Undoubtedly Kipling contributed substantially to the bond of sentiment which has in modern times united Great Britain and the United States in a feeling of world responsibility.

Thomas Hardy wrote some verse as

a young man but quickly turned to fiction, publishing his first short story when he was twenty-five. After a long and distinguished career as a novelist, he returned to poetry when he was past sixty. From 1903 to 1908 he published in three parts an epic, *The Dynasts*. Divided into nineteen acts, partly in poetry, partly in prose, *The Dynasts* glorifies England's leadership in the wars against Napoleon. The remainder of Hardy's life was devoted almost entirely to writing lyric verse. *Time's Laughingstock* appeared in his seventieth year and was followed every three or four years by a new volume until his death in 1928.

Like Wordsworth, Hardy chose common themes, which he elevated to the universal by the profundity of his interpretation. Some of his character studies he cast in the dramatic monologue form made famous by Browning. Hardy's simple diction and erratic rhyme schemes struck many of his contemporaries as harsh and prosaic, but as it turned out he was to have great influence on later poets.

Although there is much of the spirit of Kipling in John Masfield's poetry, Masfield's great love was Chaucer. Indeed, it was a chance discovery of *The Canterbury Tales* that inspired Masfield to become a poet. Masfield went to sea as a teen-ager and his love for the sea—both in its beauty and its terror—figures largely in his poetry. The distinctive quality of Masfield's poetry is vigor. He writes about common people in common language. Readers accustomed to the polished language of Tennyson found Masfield's early poems, *Dauber* and *The Everlasting Mercy*, vulgar and even shocking. Tastes were changing, how-



ever, and Masfield was appointed Poet Laureate in 1930.

A notable conservative among twentieth-century English poets has been Alfred Noyes. He wrote often in ballad style, and such of his popular poems as "The Barrel Organ," "The Highwayman," and "Forty Singing Seamen" have an infectious rhythm that fairly demands reading aloud.

World War I at first aroused a romantic fervor among English people in general and among young poets in particular. Rupert Brooke and Siegfried Sassoon were among a number of young British poets who enlisted in a spirit of idealism. Brooke died before the noble aspiration of "The Soldier" could give way to disillusionment and pessimism, but Sassoon went on to denounce war and to write such fierce and mocking satires on military life as "The Hero" and "Does It Matter?"

For a time a strain of pessimism became characteristic of English poetry, and criticism of life replaced interpretation of life as the aim of poetry. Many writers no longer saw poetry as a universal language but rather as a secret code to be deciphered only by other poets and a few initiated laymen. Chief poet of the despondent school

was the American-born T. S. Eliot, who left the United States in 1914 and became a British citizen in 1927. His poem *The Wasteland* depicts the dreariness and loneliness of life in a modern city. Later Eliot turned to poetic drama and wrote a Greek-style play, *Murder in the Cathedral*, based on the martyrdom of Thomas à Becket at Canterbury. More recently Eliot has written two modern verse dramas, *The Cocktail Party* and *The Confidential Clerk*. Both plays symbolically make the point that modern society is spiritually sick. Eliot was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1948.

A younger poet, sometimes labeled as Eliot's successor, is W. H. Auden, who in his personal life reversed Eliot's pattern and left his native England to become a citizen of the United States. Auden characterized a viewpoint typical of much current English poetry with a long, bitter poem which he titled *The Age of Anxiety*. Auden is brilliant and versatile, and his best poetry interprets contemporary life by intensifying the reader's awareness of the complexities of a rapidly changing world.

A writer, like Eliot, of poetic dramas is Christopher Fry. Best known are his short play, *The Boy with a Cart*, and the full-length plays, *The Lady's Not for Burning* and *The Dark Is Light Enough*. Fry finds his inspiration in the Elizabethan period, and his flowery language runs strongly counter to the trend, typified by Auden, toward the modern idiom in poetry.

Beginning with his *Twenty-five Poems* in 1936, Dylan Thomas has done to a lesser degree for Welsh literature what Yeats did for the Irish. Although he did not read Welsh, Thomas found his rhythms and word patterns in old

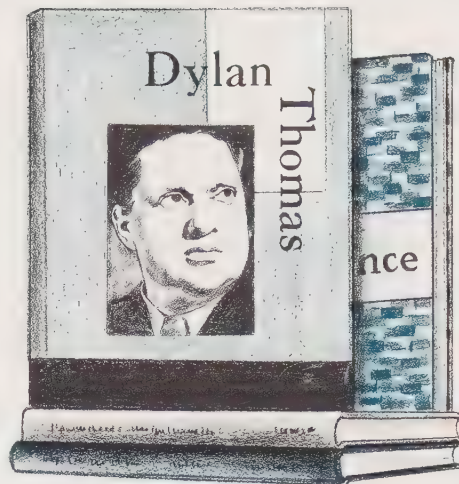
Welsh literature. His poetry is involved but intensely emotional. His Welsh nature imagery is clear and beautiful.

The poetic impulse was already strong in Britain when recorded history gives us our first glimpse of the island culture. Rising and falling like the waves of the never-distant sea, the impulse has been present through the thirteen centuries that separate John Masefield from the unknown author of *Beowulf*. Each age has created its own poetry. Yet love of tradition has always been strong in the English character, and in every age there have been poets who have looked to the past—the young Masefield drawing strength from the old Chaucer is an example. Younger poets writing today, and no doubt poets not yet born, will continue to give expression to the impulse that has in the past made English poetry one of the glories of Western culture.

VERSE FORMS

English literature is rich in verse forms. In Anglo-Saxon poetry accented syllables and alliteration were the chief characteristics. The line was the unit. It was marked by a break or a pause in the middle, with two accented syllables in each half. One or both of the accented syllables in the first half alliterated with one or both the accented syllables in the second half.

The Anglo-Saxon verse form almost disappeared during the Norman rule, and it was Chaucer who set English verse on a new track. The chief verse forms which figure in English poetry since Chaucer's time are now briefly described.



ALLITERATION—This is the device of beginning several or more accented syllables with the same sound. Alliteration was an essential feature of Anglo-Saxon poetry, and it is still in frequent use.

"Five miles meandering with a mazy motion"
—Coleridge

ASSONANCE—This is an imperfect form of internal rhyme consisting of the same vowel sounds with different consonant sounds. Assonance is often used to create sense impressions.

"To think how they may ache in icy hoods and mails"
—Keats

BALLAD STANZA—Commonly the ballad stanza consists of four lines, the first and third iambic tetrameter and the second and fourth iambic trimeter. The rhyme scheme is *abcb*. The ballad stanza has been popular in all periods except the eighteenth century.

"Ye Highlands, and ye Lawlands,
Oh, where have you been?
They have slain the Earl of Murray,
And they layd him on the green."

BLANK VERSE—Blank verse is iambic pentameter that does not rhyme. It was introduced into English poetry by Surrey and became the common form

for the dramatic poetry of Shakespeare and his contemporaries. It is a difficult verse form but highly effective in the hands of such masters as Shakespeare, Milton, Keats, and Tennyson.

CAESURA—In Anglo-Saxon poetry the caesura was the required break or pause between the first two and last two accented syllables of each line. The caesura is also used in modern poetry, especially if the lines are long.

"To err is human, // to forgive divine."
—Pope

ELEGY—Originally an elegy was a poem of lament over someone who is dead. The term has been extended to cover any sorrowful poem. Most famous elegies in English poetry are Milton's "Lycidas," Shelley's "Adonais," Tennyson's "In Memoriam," and Gray's "Elegy in a Country Churchyard."

EPIC—An epic is a long poem relating the real or fictitious history of some great action carried out with difficulty under heroic or supernatural guidance. Milton's *Paradise Lost* is the only English epic.

FREE VERSE—Free verse achieves a rhythmic effect by use of assonance, alliteration, and cadence instead of meter and rhyme. It had its origin in France and has been more popular in the United States than in England.

HEROIC VERSE—Heroic verse is iambic pentameter. It differs from blank verse in that it makes use of rhyme. Heroic verse rhyming in couplets was used by Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Keats. It was Dryden who introduced the closed couplet, in which the second line amplifies the first line or contrasts with it. Pope polished the heroic

couplet to final perfection and made it the most popular verse form of the eighteenth century.

"Be not the first by whom the new are
tried,
Nor yet the last to lay the old aside."
—Pope

IDYLL—Originally an idyll was a poem describing the more picturesque aspects of country life. Idylls in this sense are Goldsmith's "The Deserted Village" and Burns' "The Cotter's Saturday Night." Tennyson expanded the term to include narratives, as in his *Idylls of the King*.

ODE—Originally intended to be sung, an ode is now defined as a lyric expressing exaltation or great enthusiasm. As might be expected from this definition, the ode was particularly popular in the Romantic period. Earlier poets who wrote odes include Milton and Dryden.

PASTORAL—A pastoral is a poem describing the activities of shepherds and shepherdesses, usually in a conventional rather than a realistic manner.

RHYME—Rhyme is a device involving similar final sounds in two or more words. Most commonly rhyme occurs at the ends of lines. Rhyme came into English poetry through imitation of the Latin hymns of the church.

Single syllable rhymes and rhymes in which the accent falls on the final syllable are called masculine rhymes.

"And then my heart with pleasure *fills*,
And dances with the daffodils."
—Wordsworth

"O blest retirement! friend to life's *de-*
cline,
Retreats from care, that never must *be*
mine."
—Goldsmith

Two-syllable rhymes with the accent falling on the first syllable are called feminine rhymes.

"Happy field or mossy *cavern*
Choicer than the Mermaid *Tavern*"
—Keats

Rhyme occurring within a line is called internal rhyme. In internal rhyme it is usually the last word before the caesura that rhymes with the last word in the line.

"The splendour *falls* // on castle *walls*."
—Tennyson

RHYME ROYAL—Chaucer invented this first characteristically English stanza form. It is a seven-line stanza in iambic pentameter, rhyming *ababbcc*. The name is a tribute to James I of Scotland, who wrote poetry in this stanza form.

SONNET—The sonnet is a fourteen-line poem in iambic pentameter. The Italian or Petrarchian sonnet, introduced into England by Wyatt and Surrey, groups the lines into an octave rhyming *abba abba*, followed by a sestet with two additional rhymes variously arranged. Poets using this form include Milton, Wordsworth, and Keats. The Shakespearean sonnet groups the lines in three quatrains with six alternating rhymes, followed by a rhymed couplet.

SPENSERIAN STANZA—Devised by Spenser for his *Faerie Queene*, the Spenserian stanza consists of nine iambic lines, all pentameter except the last, which is hexameter. Byron used this stanza form in *Childe Harold*, and Keats also used it in "The Eve of St. Agnes."

STANZA—A regular or planned grouping of lines of poetry is called a stanza. The term *verse* is sometimes loosely used to mean stanza, especially in speaking of songs.

TYPES OF ENGLISH METER

Meter is the standard measure of poetic rhythms. Each measure, or foot, contains one accented syllable and one or two unaccented syllables. Beginning with a two-foot line, the terms are dimeter, trimeter, tetrameter, pentameter, hexameter. The common arrangements of accents are illustrated below.

IAMBIC: ∪ – This is the most common meter in English poetry. Iambic pentameter is the meter of the sonnet, blank verse, and the heroic couplet.

"And laughter holding both his sides"
—Milton

TROCHAIC: – ∪ The most common trochaic line is the tetrameter.

"Haste thee, nymph, and bring with thee"
—Milton

ANAPESTIC: ∪ ∪ –

"For the strength of the Pack is the
Wolf, and the strength of the Wolf
is the Pack."
—Kipling

DACTYLIC: – ∪ ∪

"Much have I traveled in the realms of
gold."
—Keats

SPONDAIC (– –) and **PYRRHIC** (∪ ∪) meter are sometimes used to vary an otherwise regular meter. Some words—*amen*, for example—demand equal accent on both syllables.

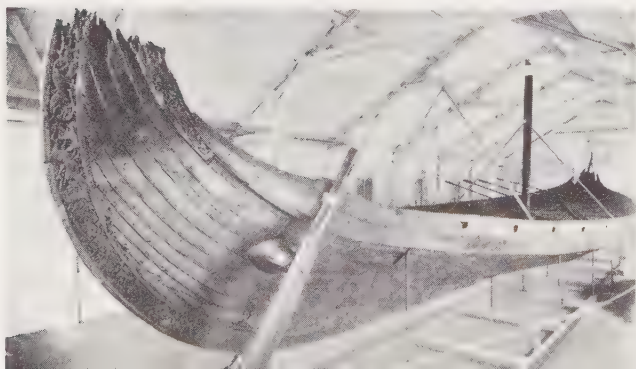
Beowulf

OUR chief inheritance from the Anglo-Saxon period is an epic poem called *Beowulf*. Its origin is uncertain, but evidence in the poem itself indicates its English composition. Since the details of the culture described in the poem are those of Scandinavia in the fifth and sixth centuries, an immigrant minstrel of that period or soon thereafter may first have brought together the history and legends which make up the story. Some of the characters mentioned in the poem have definitely been identified with figures in Danish history.

The poem was probably written down about the middle of the eighth century. Some scholars have guessed that the scribe was a Danish monk living in England. While the scribe was familiar with the Vulgate Bible and felt called upon to introduce Christian passages generally incongruous with the rest of the poem, he showed both respect and affection for his pre-Christian cultural heritage. Happily the poem has survived almost intact. The oldest known English manuscript, now in the British Museum, is a copy made in the tenth century. (See picture, p. 297.)

Consisting of two separate adventures, the poem is more than 3,000 lines long. Briefly the story is this: Hrothgar, king of the Danes, has built a great mead-hall, called Heorot, where he and his thanes feast daily. Angered by the sounds of joy in the mead-hall, a monster, Grendel, comes over the "mist-covered moor-fens" and carries off thane after thane to his den on the sea-bottom.

For twelve years no one is found who can overcome the monster. Then Beowulf, with fourteen of his best men, comes over the sea from Geatland (Sweden) to help Hrothgar. The "battle-brave" Beowulf is welcomed by the Danish king, who, as night comes on, leaves Beowulf and his companions to guard the hall. Grendel comes as usual and kills one of the sleeping men. Then he turns upon Beowulf, who, since weapons are useless against the monster, grapples with him in a hand-to-hand struggle. Finally Beo-



wulf with a mighty wrench tears Grendel's arm from its socket, and the monster, roaring with pain and rage, retires to his den where he dies.

The joy of the Dane-men is short-lived, for the following night Grendel's mother comes to avenge her son. She carries off one of Hrothgar's followers, and Beowulf is called to the rescue. He follows her over moors and through dark waters until, after a fierce struggle on the bottom of the sea, he slays her. Then cutting off the head of the dead Grendel, Beowulf swims back in triumph.

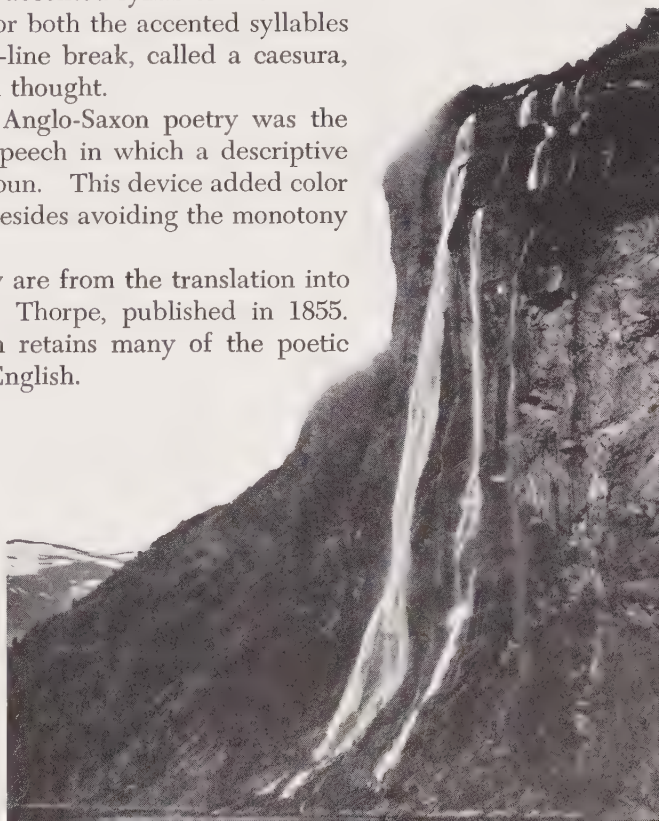
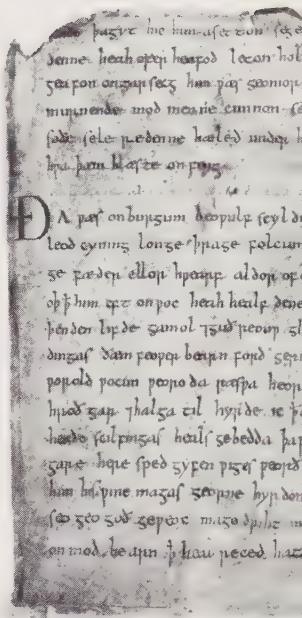
Beowulf and his men return to Geatland, where later Beowulf becomes king. After fifty years of happy rule, his country is troubled by the ravages of a dragon. The old champion goes forth to kill the monster, but though he succeeds in slaying it, he is himself mortally wounded. His grief-stricken people burn his body with great ceremony and raise a huge barrow to his memory.

The selection which follows takes up the story with the coming of Beowulf and concludes with the slaying of Grendel.

In Anglo-Saxon poetry the metrical unit was the single line, which regularly consisted of two half-lines, each with two accented syllables and a varying number of unaccented syllables. One or both of the accented syllables in the first half-line alliterated with one or both the accented syllables in the second half. The mid-line break, called a caesura, usually represented a break in thought.

A special characteristic of Anglo-Saxon poetry was the use of *kennings*—a figure of speech in which a descriptive phrase was substituted for a noun. This device added color to the language of the poem besides avoiding the monotony of noun-repetition.

The selections which follow are from the translation into modern English of Benjamin Thorpe, published in 1855. This almost literal translation retains many of the poetic qualities of the original Old English.





III. BEOWULF GOES TO HROTHGAR'S AID

So Healfdene's son¹ on sorrow brooded;
for all his wisdom the hero could not
avert the evil; that strife was too strong,
loathsome and tedious, that came on the people,
malice-brought misery, greatest of night-woes.
Then Hygelac's thane,² a Geatman good,
heard from his home of Grendel's deeds;
he of mankind was strongest in power
in that day of this life, noble and vigorous.
He bade for himself a good wave-rider
to be prepared; said he would go
over the swan-road to seek the war-king,
the prince renowned, since men he had need of.
Dear tho' he was, his prudent liegemen
little blamed him for that voyage,
whetted him rather, and noted the omen.

¹*Healfdene's son.* Hrothgar, king of the Scyldings at the time of the story.

²*Hygelac's thane.* Beowulf. Hygelac, king of the Geats, was Beowulf's uncle.



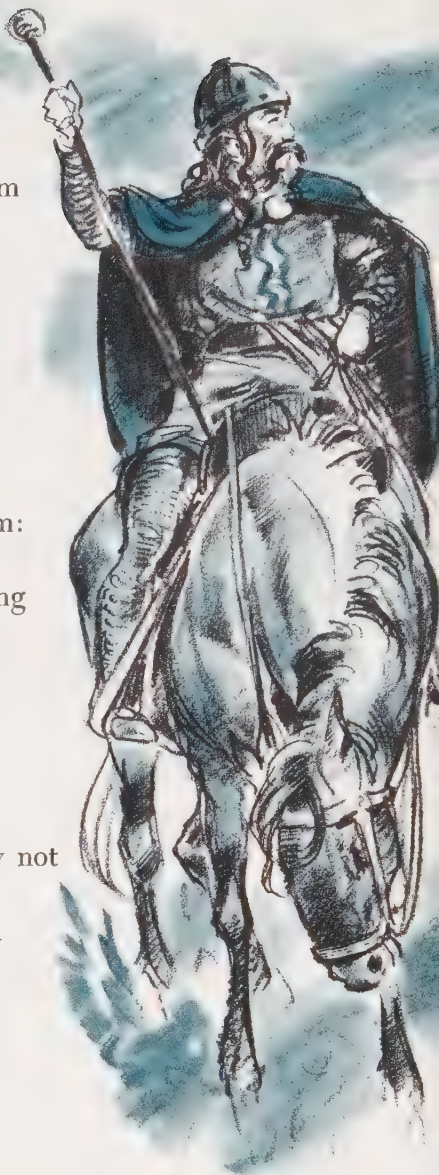
Then the good chief chose him champions
of the Geat-folk, whomso bravest
he could find, and, fourteen with him,
sought the vessel. Then the hero,
the sea-crafty man, led the way to the shore.
Time passed; the floater was on the waves,
the boat 'neath the hill; the ready warriors
stepped on the prow; the streams surged
the sea 'gainst the sand; the warriors bare
into the bark's bosom bright arms,
a rich war-array. The men shoved out
on the welcome voyage the wooden bark.

Most like to a bird the foamy-necked floater,
impelled by the wind, then flew o'er the waves
till about the same time on the second day
the twisted prow had sailed so far
that the voyagers land descried,
shining ocean-shores, mountains steep,
spacious sea-nesses. Then was the floater
at the end of its voyage. Up thence quickly

the Weders³ people stept on the plain;
the sea-wood tied; their mail-shirts shook,
their martial weeds; thanked God that to them
the paths of the waves had been made easy.

When from the wall the Scyldings' warder,
who the sea-shores had to keep,
saw bright shields borne over the gunwale,
war-gear ready, wonder arose
within his mind what those men were.
Hrothgar's thane then went to the shore,
on his horse riding, stoutly shook
the stave in his hands, and formally asked them:

"What are ye of arm-bearing men,
with byrnies⁴ protected, who thus come leading
a surgy keel over the water-street,
here o'er the seas? I for this,
placed at the land's end, have kept sea-ward,
that no enemies on the Danes' land
with a ship-force might do injury.
Never more openly hither to come
have shield-men attempted; nay, and ye knew not
surely the pass-word ready of warriors,
permission of kinsmen. Yet ne'er have I seen
earl upon earth more great than is one of you,
or warrior in arms: 'tis no mere retainer
honored in arms, unless his face belies him,
his aspect distinguished. Now your origin
must I know, ere ye farther,
as false spies, into the Danes' land
hence proceed. Now ye dwellers
afar, sea-farers, give ye heed to
my simple thought: best is it quickly
to make known whence your coming is."



³*Weders*. Another name for the Geats; also sometimes called Weder-Geats.

⁴*byrnies*. Coats of mail; armor.



IV. BEOWULF ANSWERS THE SHORE-GUARD

Him the chief of them answered then,
the band's war-leader his word-board unlocked:
"We are of race of the Geats' nation,
and hearth-enjoyers of Hygelac.
Well known to nations was my father,
a noble chieftain, Ecgtheow named;
abode many winters ere he departed
old from his courts; nigh every sage
thro' the wide earth remembers him well.
We in kindness of feeling have come
to seek thy lord, the son of Healfdene,
the folk-defender. Be a kind informant.
We have a great errand to the illustrious
lord of the Danes. Naught shall be secret
wherof my thought is. Thou knowest whether
it be in sooth as we have heard say,
that with the Scyldings I know not what wretch,
a secret ill-doer, in the dark nights
displays thro' terror unheard-of malice,
havoc and slaughter. For this may I teach,
thro' my large mind, counsel to Hrothgar,
how he, wise and good, shall o'ercome the foe,
if ever a change is to befall,
if relief from evil should ever come
and that care-welling calmer grow.
Else he ever after oppression will suffer,

a time of trouble, while standeth there
in its high place the noblest of houses.”

Then spake the warder, astride of his horse,
the officer fearless: “Between these two
should a sharp shield-warrior who thinketh well
the difference know—’tween words and works.
This band, I hear, is a friendly one
to the Scyldings’ lord. Pass ye on
with weapons and weeds; I will direct you.
Likewise will I give to my fellow-
liegemen orders in honor to keep,
’gainst every foe, your new-tarred ship,
your bark on the sand, till back o’er the water
the vessel with twisted neck shall bear
to the Weder-march the man beloved.
To such a warrior shall it surely be given
the rush of war to escape from whole.”

Then they set forth; the vessel still bode
firm in her berth, the wide-bossomed ship,
at anchor fast. A boar’s likeness sheen
’bove their cheeks they bore,⁵ adorned with gold;
stained and fire-hardened, it held life in ward.
In warlike mood the men hastened on,
descended together, until the well-timbered
hall they might see, adorned all with gold.
Unto earth’s dwellers that was the grandest
of houses ’neath heav’n, where the ruler abode;
the light of it shone over many lands.
To them the warrior pointed out clearly
the proud one’s court, that they might thither
take their way; then did the warrior
turn his steed and speak these words:

“’Tis time for me to go on my way.
May the all-ruling Father with honor hold you
safe in your fortunes. I will back to the sea,
ward to keep against hostile bands.”

⁵A boar’s likeness sheen ’bove their cheeks they bore. They were wearing helmets made to look like boar heads.



V. BEOWULF'S ARRIVAL AT HEOROT

The street was stone-paved, the path gave guidance
to the men in a body; the war-byrnie shone,
hard, hand-locked; the ringed iron bright
sang in their gear, as they to the hall
in their arms terrific came striding on.
Their ample shields, their flint-hard bucklers,
the sea-weary set 'gainst the mansion's wall,
then stooped to the benches; their byrnies rang,
the war-gear of men. In a sheaf together
the javelins stood, the seamen's arms,
ash-wood, gray-tipped. These ironclad men
were weaponed well.

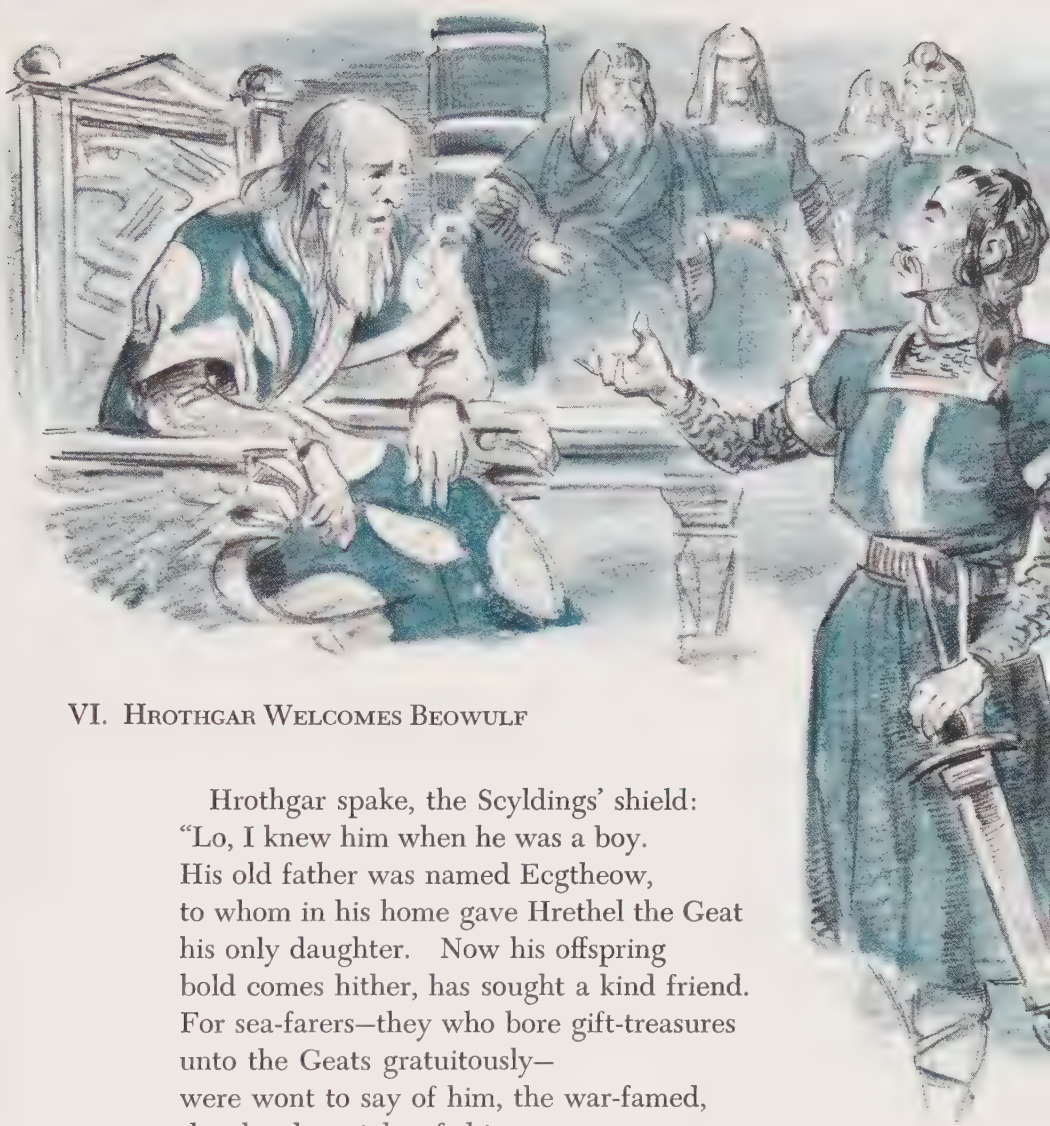
Then a proud chief asked
these sons of conflict concerning their lineage:
"Whence do ye bear your plated shields

and gray sarks hither, your visor-helms
and heap of war-shafts? I am Hrothgar's
servant and messenger. Never saw I
strangers so many and proud. I ween
that ye out of pride, of greatness of soul,
and not for exile, have sought Hrothgar."

Him then answered the famed for valor;
the Weders' proud lord, bold 'neath his helmet,
spake words afterward: "We are Hygelac's
table-enjoyers—my name, Beowulf.
I my errand will relate
to the great lord, son of Healfdene,
to thy prince, if he will grant us
graciously to greet him here."

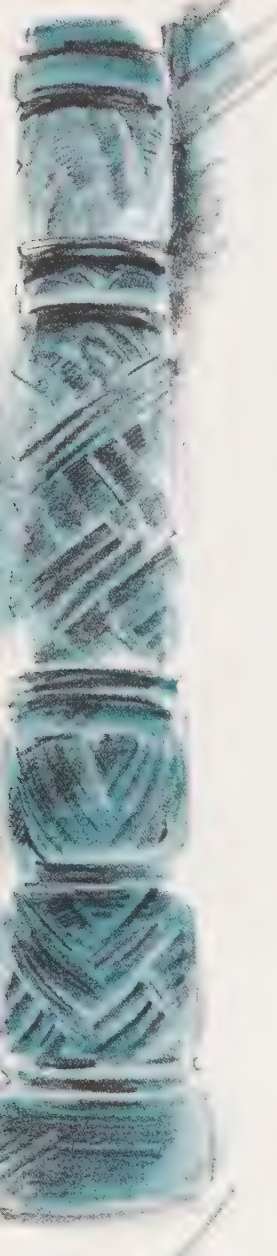
Wulfgar spake (he was lord of the Wendels;
known to many was his spirit,
his valor and wisdom): "I will therefore
ask the Danes' friend, lord of the Scyldings,
mighty prince and ring-distributor,
about thy voyage, as thou requestest,
and make quickly known the answer
that the prince thinks fit to give me."

He then went quickly where Hrothgar sat,
old and gray, among his earls;
the brave chief stood before the shoulders
of the Danes' lord—he knew court-usage.
Wulfgar spake to his friendly lord:
"Hither are borne, come from afar
o'er ocean's course, people of the Geats.
Beowulf these sons of conflict
name their chief. They make petition
that they may hold with thee, my lord,
words of converse. Decree not, Hrothgar,
denial of the boon of answer.
Worthy seem they, in their war-gear,
of earls' esteem—at least the chieftain
who has led the warriors hither."



VI. HROTHGAR WELCOMES BEOWULF

Hrothgar spake, the Scyldings' shield:
"Lo, I knew him when he was a boy.
His old father was named Ecgtheow,
to whom in his home gave Hrethel the Geat
his only daughter. Now his offspring
bold comes hither, has sought a kind friend.
For sea-farers—they who bore gift-treasures
unto the Geats gratuitously—
were wont to say of him, the war-famed,
that he the might of thirty men
has in his hand-grip. Holy God
hath in his mercies sent him to us,
to the West Danes, as I hope,
'gainst Grendel's horror. For his daring,
to the good chief gifts I'll offer.
Be thou speedy, bid these kinsmen,
assembled together, come in to see me.
Say moreover they are welcome
guests to the Danes. [Then to the hall-door
Wulfgar went.] He announced the words:



“My victor-lord, O prince of the East Danes,
bids me tell you he knows your nobleness;
that, boldly striving over the sea-billows,
ye come to him hither welcome guests.
Now ye may go in your war-accoutrements,
'neath martial helm, Hrothgar to see.
Let your battle-boards, spears, and shafts,
here await the council of words.”

Arose then the chief, his many men around him,
a brave band of thanes. Some remained there,
held the war-weeds, as the bold one bade them.
They hastened together where the warrior directed,
under Heorot's roof; the valiant one went,
bold 'neath his helmet, till he stood on the dais.
Beowulf spake; his byrnie shone on him,
his war-net sewed by the smith's devices—

“Hail to thee, Hrothgar; I am Hygelac's
kinsman and war-fellow; many great deeds⁶
in my youth have I ventured. To me on my native turf
Grendel's doings became clearly known.
Sea-farers say that this most excellent
house doth stand, for every warrior,
useless and void when the evening light
under heaven's serenity is concealed.
Then, prince Hrothgar, did my people,
the most excellent men, sagacious,
counsel me that I should seek thee,
because they knew the might of my craft.
Themselves beheld—when I came from their snares,
blood-stained from the foes—where five I bound,
the jotun-race⁷ ravaged, and slew on the billows
nickers⁸ by night; distress I suffered,
avenged the Weders (they had had misery),

⁶*great deeds.* Boasts, providing they could be made good, were considered proper in ancient Germanic societies. Modesty came in with chivalry in the Middle Ages.

⁷*jotun-race.* Giants in Norse mythology.

⁸*nickers.* Sea monsters; perhaps whales.

crushed the fell foe. And now against Grendel,
that miserable being, will I hold council,
alone with the giant.

“Of thee now, therefore,
lord of the bright Danes, Scyldings’ protector,
will I make this one petition:
now that I come so far, deny not,
O patron of warriors, friend of people,
that I alone with my band of earls,
with this bold company, may purge Heorot.
I have learned this, that the demon-like being
in his heedlessness recketh not of weapons.
I then will disdain (so may Hygelac,
my liege lord, be to me gracious of mood)
to bear a sword or round yellow shield
into the battle; but shall with the enemy
grip and grapple, and for life contend,
foe against foe. And he whom death taketh
there shall trust in the doom of the Lord.

“I ween that he, if he may prevail,
will fearlessly eat, in the martial hall,
the Geat’s people, as oft he has done
the Hrethmen’s⁹ forces. Thou wilt not need
to shroud my head, for he will have me,
stained with gore, if death shall take me;
will bear off my bloody corse to feast on it;
lonely, will eat it without compunction;
will mark out my moor-mound. Thou wilt not need
care to take for my body’s disposal.
If the conflict take me, send to Hygelac
this best of battle-coats shielding my breast,
of vests most excellent; ’tis Hraedla’s legacy,
Weland’s¹⁰ work. Fate goes aye as it must.”
[Here an evening of talk and feasting
intervenes. We take up the story again
at the close of the feast.]



⁹Hrethmen. Danes.

¹⁰Weland. Blacksmith of the gods in Norse mythology.

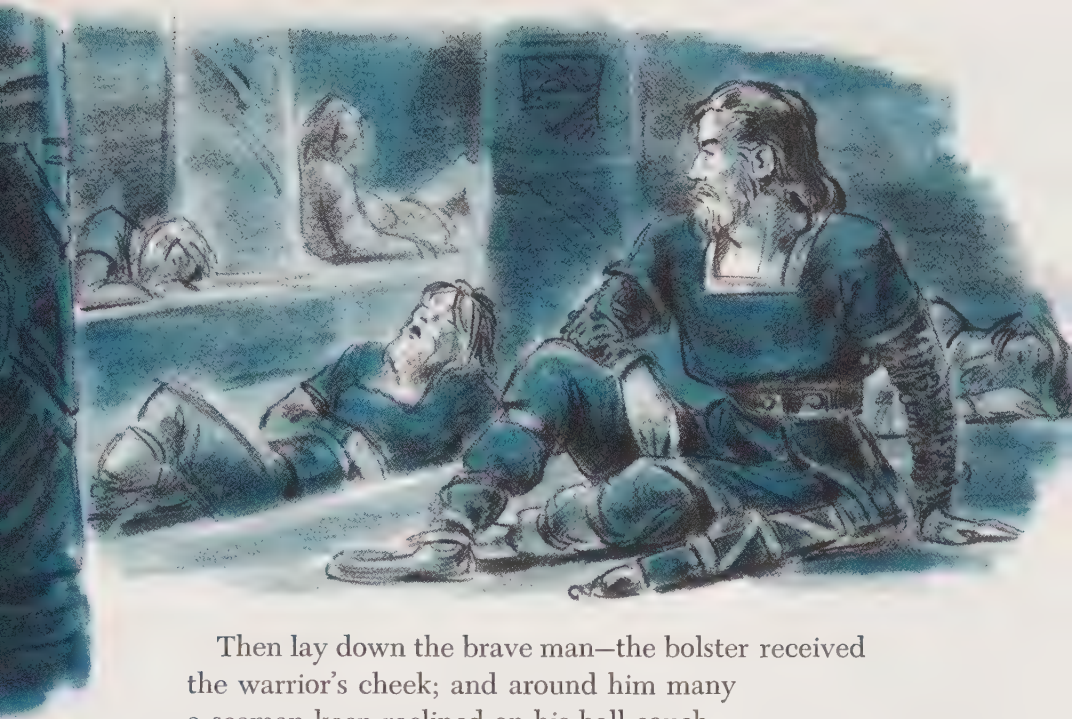


X. BEOWULF STANDS WATCH IN HEOROT

Then Hrothgar departed, the Scyldings' protector,
out of the hall with his band of warriors;
the martial leader would seek his consort,
Wealhtheow the queen. The glory of kings¹¹
had set against Grendel, as men have heard tell,
a hall-ward; he held a special office
about the Dane-prince, kept guard 'gainst the giant.
But the chief of the Geats well trusted in
his own proud might and the Creator's favor.
He doffed from him then his iron byrnie,
the helm from his head, and gave to a henchman
his sword enchased, choicest of irons,
bade him take charge of the gear of war.

Some words of pride then spake the good chief,
Beowulf the Geat, ere he mounted his bed:
"I count me no feebler in martial vigor
of warlike works than Grendel himself.
Therefore I will not, tho' easy it were,
with sword destroy him or lull him to rest.
'Tis a warfare he knows not—to strike against me
and hew my shield, renowned tho' he be
for hostile works; but we two tonight
shall do without sword, if he dare seek
war without weapon. And afterward God,
the wise, the holy, shall glory doom
to whichever hand it meet to him seemeth."

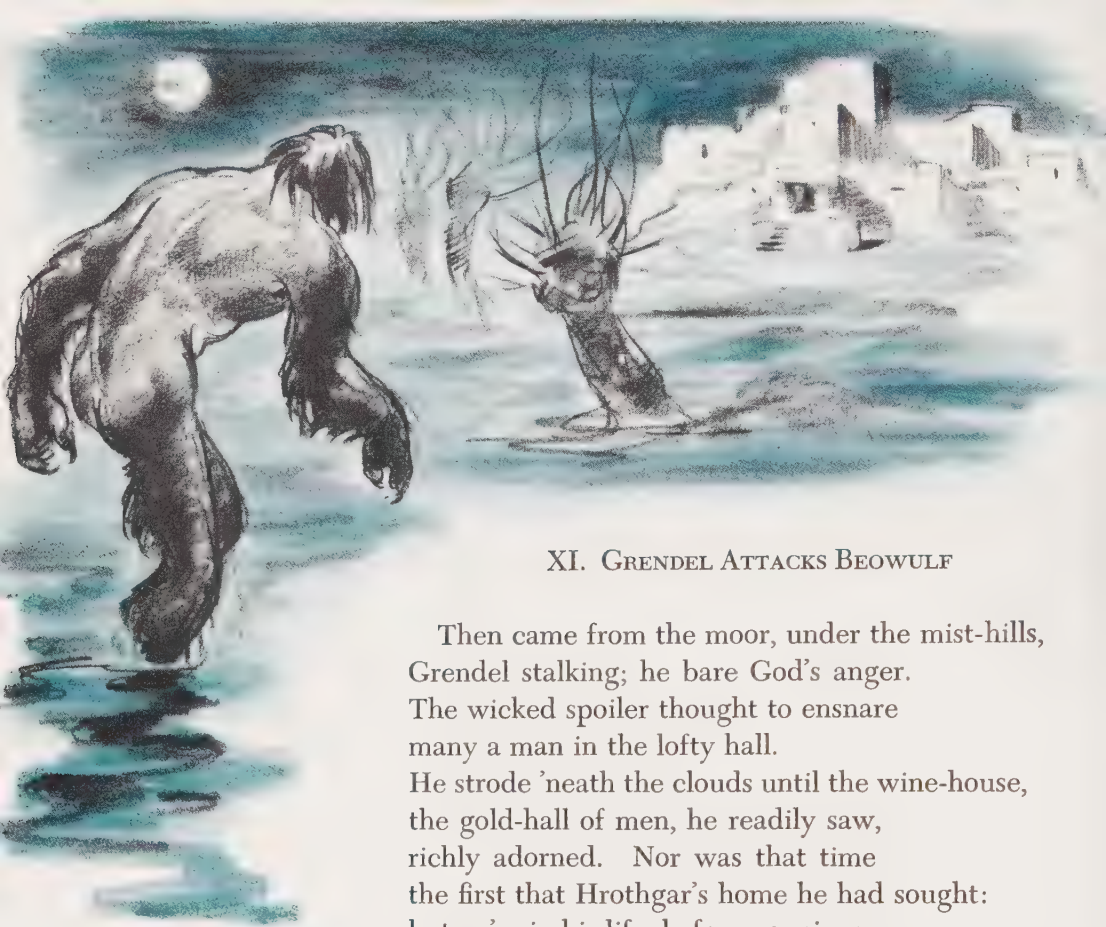
¹¹*The glory of kings.* Hrothgar. As you have probably already noticed, it was customary in Anglo-Saxon poetry to use poetic epithets in place of the frequent repetition of proper names.



Then lay down the brave man—the bolster received
the warrior's cheek; and around him many
a seaman keen reclined on his hall-couch.
Not one of them thought that he should thence
seek ever again the home he loved,
the folk or free burg where he was nurtured:
since erst they had heard how far too many
folk of the Danes a bloody death
o'ertook in that wine-hall. But to them the Lord
gave woven victory,¹² to the Weders' people
comfort and succor, so that they all
by the might of one, by his single powers,
their foe overcame. Shown is it truly
that mighty God ruleth the race of men.

Now in the murky night came stalking
the shadow-walker. All the warriors
who should defend that pinnacled mansion
slept, save one. To men it was known
that the sinful s'poiler, when God willed not,
might not drag them beneath the shade.
Natheless, he, watching in hate for the foe,
in angry mood waited the battle-meeting.

¹²*woven victory.* According to Norse mythology a man's fate was part of a fabric woven in advance by the gods.



XI. GRENDEL ATTACKS BEOWULF

Then came from the moor, under the mist-hills,
Grendel stalking; he bare God's anger.
The wicked spoiler thought to ensnare
many a man in the lofty hall.
He strode 'neath the clouds until the wine-house,
the gold-hall of men, he readily saw,
richly adorned. Nor was that time
the first that Hrothgar's home he had sought:
but ne'er in his life, before nor since,
found he a bolder man or hall-thanes.

So then to the mansion the man bereft
of joys came journeying; soon with his hands
undid the door, tho' with forged bands fast;
the baleful-minded, angry, burst open
the mansion's mouth. Soon thereafter
the fiend was treading the glittering floor,
paced wroth of mood; from his eyes started
a horrid light, most like to flame.
He in the mansion saw warriors many,
a kindred band, together sleeping,
fellow-warriors. His spirit exulted.
The fell wretch expected that ere day came
he would dis sever the life from the body
of each, for in him the hope had risen
of a gluttonous feast. Yet 'twas not his fate

that he might more of the race of men eat after that night. The mighty kinsman of Hygelac watched how the wicked spoiler would proceed with his sudden grasping.

Nor did the monster mean to delay; for he at the first stroke quickly seized a sleeping warrior, tore him unawares, bit his bone-casings, drank his veins' blood, in great morsels swallowed him. Soon had he devoured all of the lifeless one, feet and hands. He stepped up nearer, took then with his hand the doughty-minded warrior at rest; with his hand the foe reached toward him. He instantly grappled with the evil-minded, and on his arm rested.

Soon as the criminal realized that in no other man of middle-earth, of the world's regions, had he found a stronger hand-grip, his mind grew fearful.



Yet not for that could he sooner escape.
 He was bent on flight, would flee to his cavern,
 the devil-pack seek; such case had never
 in all his life-days befallen before.
 Then Hygelac's good kinsman remembered
 his evening speech; upright he stood,
 and firmly grasped him; his fingers yielded.
 The jotun was fleeing; the earl stept further.
 The famed one considered whether he might
 more widely wheel and thence away
 flee to his fen-mound; he knew his fingers' power
 in the fierce one's grasp. 'Twas a dire journey
 the baleful spoiler made to Heorot.
 The princely hall thundered; terror was
 on all the Danes, the city-dwellers,
 each valiant one, while both the fierce
 strong warriors raged; the mansion resounded.

Then was it wonder great that the wine-hall
 withstood the war-beasts, nor fell to the ground,
 the fair earthly dwelling; yet was it too fast,
 within and without, with iron bands,
 cunningly forged, though where the fierce ones
 fought, I have heard, many a mead-bench,
 with gold adorned, from its sill started.
 Before that, weened not the Scyldings' sages
 that any man ever, in any wise,
 in pieces could break it, goodly and bone-decked,
 or craftily rive—only the flame's clutch
 in smoke could devour it. Startling enough
 the noise uprose. Over the North Danes
 stood dire terror, on every one
 of those who heard from the wall the whoop,
 the dread lay sung by God's denier,
 the triumphless song of the thrall of hell,
 his pain bewailing. He held him fast—
 he who of men was strongest of might,
 of them who in that day lived this life.



XII. BEOWULF DEFEATS THE MONSTER

Not for aught would the refuge of earls
leave alive the deadly guest;
the days of his life he counted not useful
to any folk. There many a warrior
of Beowulf's drew his ancient sword;
they would defend the life of their lord,
of the great prince, if so they might.
They knew not, when they entered the strife,
the bold and eager sons of battle,
and thought to hew him on every side
his life to seek, that not the choicest
of irons on earth, no battle-falchion,



could ever touch the wicked scather,
since martial weapons he had forsworn,
every edge whatever. Yet on that day
of this life was his life-parting
wretched to be, and the alien spirit
to travel far into power of fiends.

Then he who before in mirth of mood
(he was God's foe) had perpetrated
many crimes 'gainst the race of men,
found that his body would not avail him,

for him the proud kinsman of Hygelac
 had in hand; each was to the other
 hateful alive. The fell wretch suffered
 bodily pain; a deadly wound
 appeared on his shoulder, his sinews started,
 his bone-casings burst. To Beowulf was
 the war-glory given; Grendel must thence,
 death-sick, under his fen-shelters flee,
 seek a joyless dwelling; well he knew
 that the end of his life was come, his appointed
 number of days. For all the Danes,
 that fierce fight done, was their wish accomplished.

So he then, the far-come, the wise and strong
 of soul, had purified Hrothgar's hall,
 saved it from malice; his night's work rejoiced him,
 his valor-glories. The Geatish chieftain
 had to the East-Danes his boast fulfilled,
 had healed, to-wit, the preying sorrow
 that they in that country before had suffered
 and had to endure for hard necessity,
 no small affliction. A manifest token
 it was when the warrior laid down the hand—
 arm and shoulder, Grendel's whole grappler
 together there—'neath the vaulted roof.

Discussion

1. How long was the journey from Geatland to the land of the Danes?
2. What question did the coast-guard put to Beowulf? What was Beowulf's answer?
3. What impression did Beowulf and his men make on the coast-guard?
4. Describe the appearance of Beowulf's men as they approach Heorot. How do they impress Wulfgar?
5. What previous knowledge of Beowulf does Hrothgar have?
6. What was the "court-usage" involved in the meeting of Beowulf and Hrothgar?

7. What does Beowulf mean when he says, "This most excellent house doth stand, for every warrior, useless and void when the evening light under heaven's serenity is concealed"?
8. What were Beowulf's preparations for meeting Grendel? How did his men feel about the coming encounter?
9. How do you interpret the statement that Grendel "bare God's anger"?
10. What is the significance of the line in Stanza XI, "Then Hygelac's good kinsman remembered his evening speech"?
11. Quote phrases which indicate that the person who wrote *Beowulf* was acquainted with Christianity.
12. What does the poem reveal about the domestic customs of the Danes? Give specific illustrations.
13. Making allowance for the fact that this version of *Beowulf* is a translation, point out poetic qualities which have been preserved. Point out examples of caesura and alliteration. Quote several kennings which you consider particularly effective. Point out half a dozen figures of speech.

Research

1. It would be worthwhile to have class reports on Beowulf's encounter with Grendel's mother and his later encounter with the dragon. If your school or public library does not have the Benjamin Thorpe translation, it is likely that it will have Francis B. Gummere's *The Oldest English Epic* or J. Duncan Spaeth's *Old English Poetry*. Both of the suggested reports should include some reading aloud from the poem.
2. To broaden your acquaintance with Anglo-Saxon poetry you might like to read Alfred Lord Tennyson's translation of "The Battle of Brunanburh." It is included in most collections of Tennyson's poetry.
3. If you have ability in drawing, you might like to illustrate one or more scenes from the poem, or perhaps try to reconstruct Heorot from the clues the poem provides.
4. Several members of the class might find it fun to make a collection of modern kennings, words we have compounded to describe new objects, such as *windshield*, *railroad*, *air-conditioning*, *television*.

1340?-1400

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

GEOFFREY CHAUCER was born in London around 1340. His father was the wine-dealer who supplied the royal court, and when Geoffrey was seventeen he went to work in the royal household. We do not know what his formal education was, but it is evident he understood French and Latin. At nineteen he went to France in the army of Edward III. He was taken prisoner but was ransomed by the king.

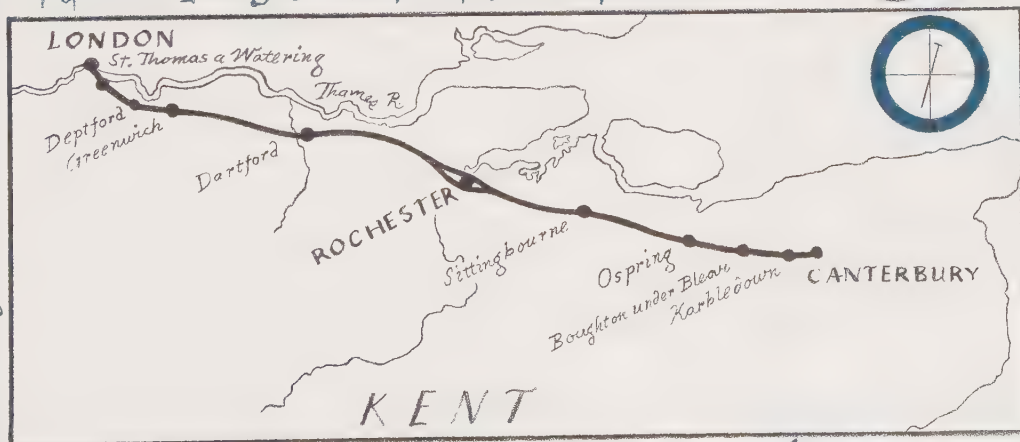
It was probably around 1366 that Chaucer married Philippa, a lady-in-waiting to the queen. In 1367 he was awarded a small pension, later increased, then cut off, and finally restored. Chaucer traveled on government missions on the continent in 1370 and 1372. On the second trip he got to Italy and may have visited the poet Petrarch in Padua. In 1374 he was appointed comptroller of customs of the port of London, one of a number of government offices he held at various times.

Chaucer's first important poem was his *Boke of the Duchess*, written for the king's son, John of Gaunt, on the death of his wife in 1369. This poem shows the influence of the French *Roman de la Rose*, a portion of which Chaucer had translated into English. Also showing French influence is his *Legende of Goode Wommen*, written about 1384 as a tribute to the young queen of Richard II. It was to set forth the stories of twenty women noted for their constancy, but it was less than half completed. It is in the prologue of this poem that Chaucer wrote the often quoted line, "On bokes for to rede I me delyte."

Italian influence began to show up in Chaucer's poetry when he was about forty. His *Troilus and Criseyde*, written about 1382, reveals debts to Boccaccio; and *The Hous*



Of aukes, than yf he had be a Comptroller in this liden



of aukes, than yf he had be a Comptroller in this liden

of aukes, than yf he had be a Comptroller in this liden

Chaucer's home



of *Fame*, about 1384, shows the influence of Dante. Having lost his pension in 1385, Chaucer addressed to the new king, Henry IV, *The Complaynt of Chaucer to his Purs.* The pension was restored, but Chaucer died before receiving the first payment. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, where his grave became the nucleus of The Poets' Corner.

Chaucer's greatest work, *The Canterbury Tales*, was probably begun about 1387 and was left unfinished at his death. Although the plan of having a group of persons tell stories may have been borrowed from Boccaccio, and most of the stories are of foreign origin, the poem is completely English in characters, setting, humor, and psychology. It was Chaucer's genius which made each storyteller a richly human individual and which adapted the stories to the various speakers.

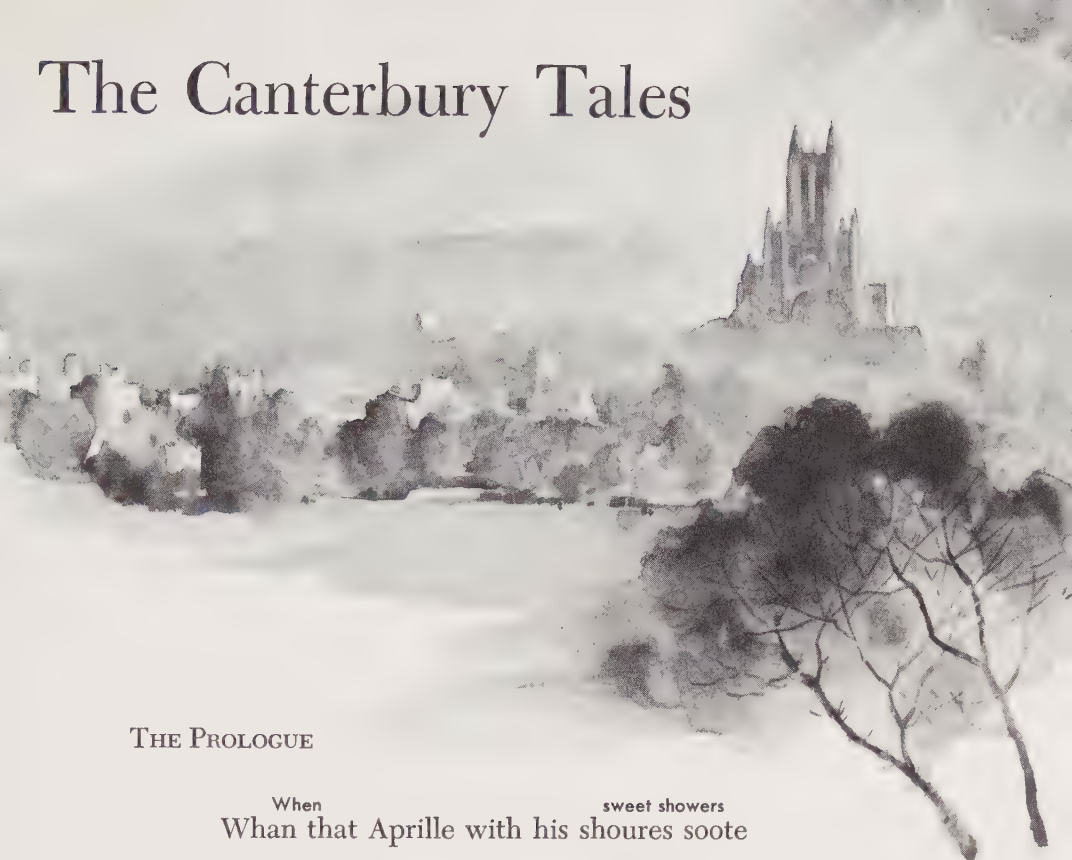
The plot begins with a chance gathering at the Tabard Inn of persons setting out on the three-and-a-half-day pilgrimage to the shrine of the martyred Thomas à Becket ("the holy blisful martir") in Canterbury. Harry Bailey, the Tabard host, suggests that each member of the party (thirty-one, counting Chaucer and Bailey), tell two tales going and two returning and promises a free dinner to the one that "bereth hym best of alle." The first lot falls to the knight. Others, with some wrangling for position, take their turns till the poem breaks off after twenty-four stories have been told.

The 17,000 lines of *The Canterbury Tales* are written mainly in heroic couplets in iambic pentameter, a verse form which Chaucer introduced into English poetry. For modern readers the meter has been obscured by changes in pronunciation. While it is not worthwhile for high-school students to learn all the technicalities of Middle English pronunciation, it is helpful to keep in mind that as a general rule all final *e*'s are sounded, except when followed by a vowel. It is also helpful to realize that the meaning of a word can more often be guessed from the sound than the spelling. It might be mentioned, too, that in Chaucer's day the double negative was considered perfectly acceptable.

There are surviving today about sixty manuscript copies of *The Canterbury Tales* made during Chaucer's lifetime or soon thereafter. The first printed version was published by Caxton in 1478. Quite aside from the merit of *The Canterbury Tales* itself, the poem proved once and for all that the English language was both suitable and "sufficient" for a literature of its own.

Tabard Inn





The Canterbury Tales

THE PROLOGUE

When
Whan that Aprille with his shoures soote

sweet showers

THE PROLOGUE

When sweet showers
Whan that Aprille with his shoures soote
drought pierced
The droghte of Marche hath perced to the roote,
vein such sap
And bathed every veyne in swich licour,
power grows the flower
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;
the west wind also
Whan Zephirus eek with his sweete breeth
wood and heath
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
tender shoots sun
The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
run
Hath in the Ram his halfe cours y-ronne,¹
birds
And smale fowles maken melodye,

¹*in the Ram his halfe cours y-ronne.* During the last part of March and the first part of April the sun lies in the zodiacal sign of the Ram. According to the medieval calendar the year began on March 25, so the sun is still “young.”



That ^{sleep}slepen al the night with open ^{eyes}yē

(So ^{prompts}priketh hem nature in hir ^{their hearts}corages):

Than ^{long}longen folk to ^{go}goon on pilgrimages

(And ^{seek}palmers for to ^{shores}seken straunge strondes)

To ^{distant shrines}ferne halwes, couth in ^{known}sondry ^{sundry lands}londes;

And specially, from every shires ende

Of Engelond, to Caunterbury they wende

The holy blisful martir for to seke,

That ^{them}hem hath ^{helped}holpen, whan that they were ^{sick}seke.

^{It befell}Bifel that, in that seson on a day,

In Southwerk at the ^{Tabard Inn}Tabard as I lay

Redy to wenden on my pilgrimage

To Caunterbury with ful devout ^{heart}corage,

At night was come in-to that hostelrye

^{Full}Wel nyne and twenty in a companye,

Of sondry folk, by ^{chance}aventure ^{fallen}y-falle



In felaweshipe, and pilgrims were they alle,
That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde;

The chambres and the stables ^{were wide} weren wyde,

And wel we weren esed ^{made comfortable} atte beste.

And shortly, whan the sonne was to reste,

So hadde I spoken with hem ^{everyone} everichon,

That I was of hir felaweshipe ^{soon} anon,

And ^{arrangements} made forward erly for to ryse,

To take our wey, ther as I ^{you tell} yow devyse.

But ^{nevertheless} natheless, whyl I have tyme and space,

Er that I ferther in this ^{go on} tale pace,

Me thinketh it acordaunt to resoun,

To telle yow al the condicioun

Of ech of hem, so as it semed me,

And ^{who} whiche they weren, and of ^{social rank} what degree;

And eek in ^{also} what ^{clothing} array that they were inne:

And at a knight than wol I first beginne.

A KNIGHT ther was, and that a worthy man,
That fro the tyme that he first bigan
To ryden out, he loved chivalrye,

^{Truth} Trouthe and honour, ^{liberality} fredom and curteisye.

Ful worthy was he in his lordes ^{war} werre,

And therto hadde he riden (no man ^{farther} ferre)

As wel in Cristendom as ^{in heathen lands} hethenesse,
And evere honoured for his worthinesse.

^{Alexandria} At Alisaundre he was, whan it was wonne;

Ful ofte tyme he hadde the bord bigonne ^{sat at the head of the table}

Aboven alle naciouns in ^{Prussia} Puce.

^{Lithuania} In Lettow hadde he reysed and in ^{Russia} Ruce,
No Cristen man so ofte of his degree.

^{Granada} In Gernade at the sege eek hadde he be

^{Algeciras} Of Algezir, and riden in ^{Benmarin} Belmarye.

^(two towns in Asia Minor) At Lyey was he, and at Satalye

Whan they were wonne; and in the ^{Mediterranean} Grete See

At many a noble armee hadde he be. ^{expedition}

At mortal batailles hadde he been fiftene, ^{deadly battles}

And foughten for our feith at Ramissene ^(in Asia Minor)

^{on the tournament field} In listes thryes, and ay slayn his ^{foe} foo.

This ilke worthy knight had been also ^{same}

^{Formerly} Somtyme with the lord of Palatye, ^(in Asia Minor)



Against
Ageyn another hethen in Turkye:

And everemore he hadde a sovereyn prys.
And though that he were worthy, he was wys,

And of his port as meke as is a mayde.

He nevere yet no vileinye ne sayde

In al his lyf, un-to no maner wight.

He was a verray parfit gentil knight.
But for tellen yow of his array,

His hors were goode, but he was nat gay.

Of fustian he wered a gipoun

Al bismotered with his habergeoun;

For he was late y-come from his viage,
And wente for to doon his pilgrimage.

With him ther was his sone, a yong SQUYER,
A lovyer, and a lusty bachelor,

With lokkes crulle, as they were leyd in presse.
Of twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse.

Of his stature he was of evene lengthe,

And wonderly deliveré, and greet strengthe.

And he hadde been somtyme in chivachye,

In Flaundres, in Artoys, and Picardye,

And born him wel, as of so litel space,



In hope to stonden in his ^{lady's favor} lady grace.

^{Embroidered} Embrouded was he, as it were a mede ^{meadow}
Al ful of fresshe floures, whyte and rede.

Singinge he was, or ^{whistling} floytinge, al the day;
He was as fresh as is the month of May.
Short was his goune, with sleves longe and wyde.²

Wel coude he sitte on hors, and ^{well} faire ryde.

He coude songes make and ^{compose} wel endyte,

^{Joust} Juste and eek daunce, and ^{draw} wel purtreye and wryte.

So hote he lovede, that by ^{hotly} nightertale ^{night time}
He sleep namore than doth a nightingale.

^{Courteous} Curteys he was, ^{helpful} lowly, and servisable,

And ^{carved} carf ^{for} biforn his fader at the table.

Ther was also a Nonne, a PRIORESSE,

That of hir smyling was full simple and ^{shy} coy;

Hir gretteste ^{oath} ooth was but by sēynt Loy:³

And she was cleped madame Eglentyne.
^{named} Ful wel she song the service divyne,

^{Intoned} Entuned in hir nose ful ^{properly} semely;

And French she spak ful faire and ^{elegantly} fetisly,

^{school} After the scole of Stratford atte Bowe,⁴
For French of Paris was to hir unknowe.



²sleves longe and wyde. This was the height of fashion in Chaucer's day.

³sēynt Loy. Patron saint of goldsmiths. This was considered very mild swearing.

⁴Stratford atte Bowe. A town near London where there was a Benedictine convent.

^{table} At mete wel y-taught was she ^{withal} with-alle;
^{let} She leet no morsel from hir lippes falle,
^{Nor} Ne wette hir fingres⁵ in hir sauce depe.
^{lift} Wel coude she carie a morsel, and wel kepe,
^{fell} That no drope ne fille up-on hir brest.
^{manners} In curteisye was set ful moche ^{much} hir lest. ^{pleasure}
 Hir over lippe wyped she so clene,
^{cup} That in hir coppe was no ferthing sene ^{particle}
^{had drunk} Of grece, whan she dronken hadde hir draughte.
^{reached} Ful semely after hir mete she raughte,
^{surely} And sikerly she was of greet disport, ^{good humor}
^{deportment} And ful pleasaunt, and amiable of port,
^{took pains} And peyned hir to countrefete chere ^{imitate} ^{the manners}
^{be} Of court, and been estatlich of manere, ^{dignified}
^{be held} And to ben holden digne of reverence, ^{worthy}
^{compassionate} But, for to speken of hir conscience,
 She was so charitable and so pitous,
 She wolde wepe, if that she sawe a mous
 Caught in a trappe, if it were deed or bledde.
^{dogs} Of smale houndes had she, that she fedde
^{white bread} With rosted flesh, or milk and wastel-breed,
^{one} But sore weep she if oon of hem were deed,

⁵Ne wette hir fingres. This was before the day of forks.



Or if men smoot it with a yerde smerte:
And al was conscience and tendre herte.

Ful semely hir wimpel ^{head covering was pleated} pinched was;

Hir nose ^{shapely} tretys, hir eyen greye as glas;

Hir mouth ful smal, and ther-to ^{besides} softe and reed;

But ^{surely} sikerly she hadde a fair forheed:

It was almost a spanne⁶ ^{broad} brood, I trowe;

For, ^{certainly} hardily, she was not ^{undersized} undergrowe.

Ful fetis was hir cloke, as I was war.
Of smal coral aboute hir arm she bar

A peire of bedes, ^{string} gauded al with grene; ^(set off at intervals with green beads)

And ther-on heng a broche of gold ful shene,
On which ther was first write a crowned A,

And after, ^{Love conquers all things} *Amor vincit omnia*.

A MONK ther was, a fair for the maistrye,

An out-rydere,⁷ ^{hunting} that lovede venerye;
A manly man, to been an abbot able.

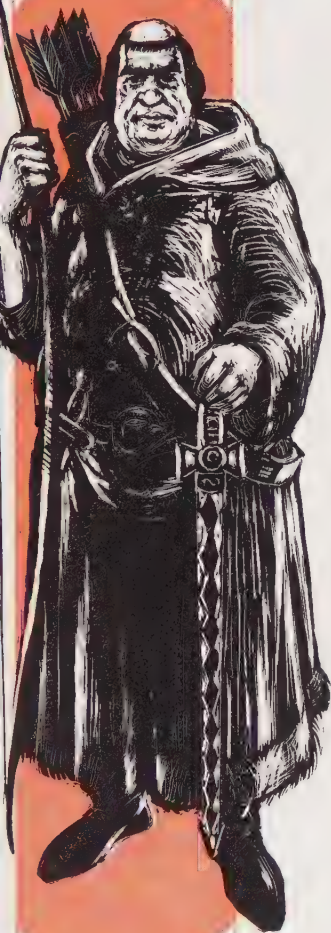
Ful many a ^{fine} deyntee hors hadde he in stable:
And, whan he rood, men mighte his brydel here
Ginglen in a whistling wynd as clere,
And eek as loude as doth the chapel-belle

^{Where} Ther-as this lord was keper of the celle.



⁶*spanne*. Distance from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the little finger.

⁷*out-rydere*. It was his assignment to ride out and inspect the farms and other property belonging to his monastery.



^{rules} The reule of seint Maure or of seint Beneit ^{Benedict}

^{Because} By-cause that it was old and som-del streit, ^{somewhat strict}

This ilke monk leet olde thinges pace, ^{(the old rules) pass}

And held after the newe world the space. ^{ways}

He yaf nat of that text a ^{gave not for} pulled hen, ^{plucked}
That seith, that hunters been nat holy men;
Ne that a monk, whan he is cloisterlees,

Is lykned til a fish that is waterlees; ^{out of water}
This is to seyn, a monk out of his cloistre.
But thilke text held he nat worth an oistre;
And I seyde, his opinioun was good.

What sholde he studie, and make him-selven wood, ^{crazy}
Upon a book in cloistre alwey to poure,

Or swinken with his handes, and laboure, ^{work}

As Austin⁸ bit? ^{bids} How shal the world be served?

Let ^{Let} Lat Austin have his swink to him reserved!

Therefore he was a ^{hard rider rightly} pricasour aright;
Grehoundes he hadde, as swifte as fowel in flight;

Of priking and of hunting for the hare ^{tracking}

Was al his lust, for no cost wolde he spare. ^{pleasure} ^{would}

I seigh his sleeves purfild at the hond ^{saw} ^{edged} ^{hand}

With grys, and that the fyneste of a lond; ^{gray fur} ^{in the land}

And, for to festne his good under his chin, ^{fasten}

⁸Austin. Saint Augustine, who established the rules for the Augustinian friars.

He hadde of gold y-wroght a curious pin:
A love-knotte in the gretter ende ther was.

His heed was balled, that shoon^{shone} as any glas^{mirror},
And eek his face, as he hadde been anoint.

He was a lord ful fat and in good point;^{embonpoint}

His eyen stepe, and rollinge in his heed,^{protruding}

That stemed as a forneys of a leed;^{glowed like a fire under a caldron}

His botes souple, his hors in greet estat.^{boots supple}
Now certainly he was a fair prelat;^{condition}

He was nat pale as a for-pyned goost.^{starved ghost}
A fat swan loved he best of any roost.
His palfrey was as broun as is a berye.

A CLERK ther was of Oxenford also,^{student}

That un-to logik hadde longe y-go.^{devoted himself}
As lene was his hors as is a rake,

And he nas nat right fat, I undertake;^{was not}
But loked holwe, and ther-to soberly.^{affirm}

But loked holwe, and ther-to soberly.^{hollow}
Ful thredbar was his overest courtpey.^{besides solemn}

Ful thredbar was his overest courtpey,^{outer short coat}

For he had geten him yet no benefice,^{position in a church}

Ne was so worldly for to have office.^{position in business}

For him was levere have at his beddes heed^{he would rather}
Twenty bokes, clad in blak or reed,
Of Aristotle and his philosophye,

Than robes riche, or fithele, or gay sautrye.^{fiddle}
^{psaltery (harp)}



But al be that he was a philosop⁹hre,
Yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre;

But al that he mighte of his frendes ^{get}hente
On bokes and on lerninge he it spente,
And bisily gan for the soules preye

Of ^{them}hem that ^{gave}yaf him wher-with to ^{attend school}scoleye.

Of studie took he most ^{care}cure and most hede.
Noght o word spak he more than was nede,
And that was seyð in forme and reverence,

And short and quik, and ful of hy ^{meaning}sentence.

^{Tending to}Sowninge in moral vertu was his speche,
And gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly teche.¹⁰

A SERGEANT OF THE LAWE, ^{wary}war and wys,

That often hadde been at the ^{church porch}parvys,¹¹
Ther was also, ful riche of excellence.

Discreet he was, and of greet ^{inspiring reverence}reverence:

He semed ^{such}swich, his wordes weren so wyse.

Justyce he was ful often in ^{court of assize}assyse

By ^{license}patente and by ^{full}pleyn commissioun;

For his ^{legal knowledge}science, and for his heigh renoun

Of fees and robes hadde he ^{many a one}many oon.



⁹*philosophre*. This is a play on words. In Chaucer's day alchemists were searching for the *philosopher's stone* which would turn base metals into gold.

¹⁰*gladly teche*. This famous line has often been quoted in praise of great teachers.

¹¹*parvys*. Lawyers often met their clients in the portico of St. Paul's Cathedral.

So greet a purchasour was no-wher noon.
conveyancer none

Al was fee simple to him in effect,
unconditional inheritance

His purchasing mighte nat been infect.
transfers could not be invalidated

No-wher so bisy a man as he ther nas,
was
 And yet he semed bisier than he was.

In termes hadde he caas and domes alle,
exact words cases decisions

That from the tyme of King William¹² were falle.
had occurred

Therto he coude endyte, and make a thing,
compose document

Ther coude no wight pinche at his wryting;
find fault with

And every statut coude he pleyn by rote.
law knew

He rood but hoonly in a medlee cote
simply of mixed colors

Girt with a ceint of silk, with barres smale;
sash
 Of his array telle I no lenger tale.



A good WYF was ther of bisyde Bathe,
somewhat a pity
 But she was some-del deaf, and that was scathe.
skill
 Of cloth-making she hadde swiche an haunt,
Ghent
 She passed hem of Ypres and of Gaunt¹³
 In al the parisshe wyf ne was ther noon
 That to the offring bifore hir sholde goon;
wrathy
 And if ther dide, certeyn, so wrooth was she,
 That she was out of alle charitee.
kerchiefs texture
 Hir coverchiefs ful fyne were of ground;

¹²King William. William the Conqueror, who became ruler in 1066.

¹³Ypres and Gaunt. Towns in Belgium famous for fine weaving.

durst

I dorste swere they weyeden ten pound¹⁴
That on a Sonday were upon hir heed.
Hir hosen weren of fyn scarlet reed,

soft

Ful streite y-teyed, and shoes ful moiste and newe.
Bold was hir face, and fair, and reed of hewe.
She was a worthy womman al hir lyve,
Housbondes at chirche-dore¹⁵ she hadde fyve,

Besides

Withouten other compaignye in youthe;

at present

But therof nedeth nat to speke as nouthe.
And thryes hadde she been at Jerusalem;¹⁶
She hadde passed many a straunge stroom;
At Rome she hadde been, and at Boloigne,
In Galice at Seint Jame, and at Coloigne.
She coude moche of wandring by the weye:

to tell the truth

Gat-tothed¹⁷ was she, soothly for to seye.
Up-on an amblere esily she sat,
Y-wimpled wel, and on hir heed an hat

(both round shields)

As brood as is a bokeler or a targe;

riding-skirt

A foot-mantel aboute hir hipes large,

spurs

And on hir feet a paire of spores sharpe.

chatter

In felaweshipe wel coude she laughe and carpe.



¹⁴*weyden ten pound.* Headdresses were often heavily decorated with gold and silver ornaments.

¹⁵*at chirche-dore.* In Chaucer's day marriages were performed at the church door rather than at the altar.

¹⁶*at Jerusalem.* As evidenced by the size of the group going to Canterbury, pilgrimages were popular in Chaucer's day. As revealed in the following lines, the Wife of Bath had made many pilgrimages, perhaps because she had many sins to be forgiven, perhaps merely because she liked to travel. There was a famous image of the Virgin in Boulogne; a shrine to St. James in Galicia, Spain; and the bones of the Three Wise Men were said to be buried in Cologne.

¹⁷*Gat-tothed.* Her teeth were wide apart. Gat-toothed people, according to an old superstition, are destined to travel widely.

Of remedies of love she knew per-chaunce,
 For she coude of that art the olde daunce.

A good man was ther of religioun,
 And was a povre ^{poor} ^{parson} PERSON of a toun;
 But riche he was of holy thought and werk.
 He was also a lerned man, a clerk,
 That Cristes gospel trewely wolde preche;

His ^{parishioners} parissshens devoutly wolde he teche.

Kindly ^{wonderfully}
 Benigne he was, and wonder diligent,
 And in adversitee ful pacient;

And swich he was y-^{such} ^{proved} ^{times}proved ofte sythes.

Ful looth were him to ^{excommunicate} cursen for his ^{church dues} tythes,

But rather wolde he ^{give} ^{without doubt}yeven, out of doute
 Un-to his povre parissshens aboute

Of his ^{gifts to him} offring, and ^{also} eek of his ^{property} substaunce.

He coude in litel thing han ^{have enough} suffisaunce.

Wyd was his parisshe, and houses ^{far apart} fer a-sonder,

But he ne ^{ceased not} lafte nat, for reyn ne thonder,

In siknes nor in ^{trouble} meschief to visyte

The ^{farthest} ferreste in his parisshe, ^(rich and poor) moche and lyte,
 Up-on his feet, and in his hand a staf.

This noble ensample to his sheep he ^{gave} yaf,
 That first he wroghte, and afterward he taughte;

Out of the gospel he ^{those} tho wordes caughte;
 And this figure he added eek ther-to,





That if gold ruste, what shal yren do?^{iron}
For if a preest be foul, on whom we truste,

No wonder is a lewed man to ruste;^{ignorant}

And shame it is, if a preest take ^{notice}
A [dirty] shepherde and a clene sheep.

Wel oghte a preest ensample for to yive,^{give}
By his clenness, how that his sheep shold live.

^{He did not sub-let his parish}
He sette nat his benefice to hyre,

And leet his sheep encombred in the myre,^{leave stuck mud}

And ran to London, un-to sēynt Poules,^{Paul's}

To seken him a chaunterie^{chantry}¹⁸ for soules,

Or with a brotherhed^{brotherhood} to been withholde;^{be supported}
But dwelte at hoom, and kepte wel his folde,

So that the wolf ne made it nat miscarie;^{miscarry}

He was a shepherde and no mercenarie.^{hireling}¹⁹
And though he holy were, and vertuous,

He was to sinful man nat despitous,^{merciless}

Ne of his speche daungerous ne digne,^{overbearing nor proud}
But in his teching discreet and benigne.
To drawen folk to heven by fairnesse

By good ensample,^{example} was his bisynesse:
But it were any persone obstinat,
What-so he were, of heigh or lowe estat,

¹⁸*chaunterie*. Wealthy people who wanted masses said for them after death left money to St. Paul's Cathedral for the maintenance of priests.

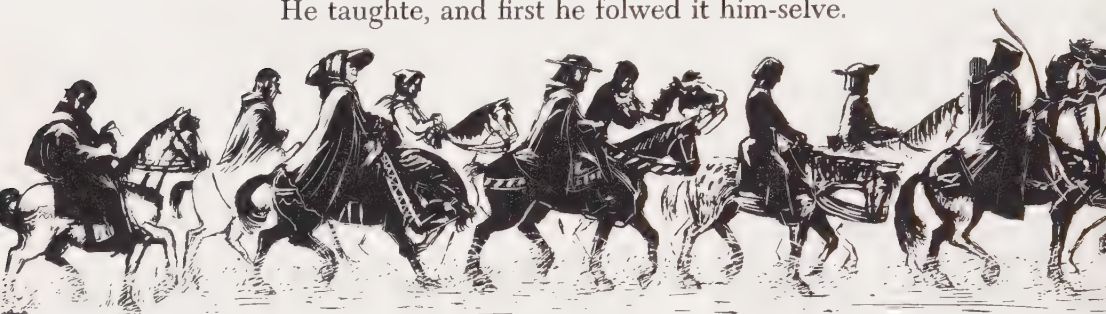
¹⁹*no mercenarie*. Jesus had said a good shepherd would not leave his sheep to the care of a hireling.

Him wolde he ^{reprove} snibben sharply for the nones. ^{at once}

A bettre preest, I trowe that nowher noon is. ^{believe}

He wayted ^{looked for} after no pompe and reverence,

Ne maked him a ^{overscrupulous} spyced conscience,
But Cristes lore, and his apostles twelve,
He taughte, and first he folwed it him-selve.



Discussion

1. What spirit or mood does Chaucer create with his opening stanza?
2. What purpose does the second stanza serve? Point out the line that is most revealing of Chaucer's personality.
3. What does Chaucer tell us about the life of a knight in the fourteenth century?
4. Which traits ascribed to the knight would today be considered characteristic of a gentleman?
5. By what details does Chaucer show that the squire belongs to a different generation than his father?
6. What rather "worldly" interests does the prioress display? Quote lines in which Chaucer pokes fun at her.
7. What was the monk's chief interest in life? What was his attitude toward monastic "rules"? How do you think Chaucer meant us to take his comment, "And I seyde, his opinioun was good"?
8. The clerk was no doubt typical of college students in his day. Why would he be far less typical today?
9. Do you think Chaucer approved or disapproved of the clerk? Quote passages to support your opinion.
10. Of the character sketches included here, the description of the

lawyer is one of the least kind. Is this an attitude of mind that still survives? How do you account for it?

11. How does the wife of Bath disprove the common notion that women led sheltered lives in the Middle Ages?
12. Does the wife of Bath seem to you a universal character? Quote passages to prove your answer.
13. What truly Christian attitudes does the parson display?
14. Quote the two lines about the parson which set up a significant goal for people of all ages.
15. For each of the eight pilgrims described in this selection find the one or two lines in which Chaucer summarizes the person's character.
16. Point out passages which show that Chaucer was a shrewd observer and did not take people at "face value."
17. Point out examples of Chaucer's humor. In each case decide whether it is cruel or kindly.
18. Which of the characters represented here do you think Chaucer most admired? On what evidence do you base your conclusion?
19. Point out several good examples each of simile and metaphor.
20. What have you learned about the English language from reading this selection? How has the experience affected your attitude toward the English language of today?



Research

1. Now that you have discovered you can read Chaucer in the original, you may want to read the rest of the Prologue and perhaps even one of the Tales. Most libraries will have *The Canterbury Tales* in the original, as well as in one or more modern translations. It would be worthwhile to have oral reports on several additional pilgrims and on the Nun's Priest's Tale of "Chauntecler and Pertelote" and the Clerk's Tale of "The Patient Griselda."
2. Marchette Chute's biography, *Geoffrey Chaucer of England*, is highly readable and would provide much interesting material for an oral report.
3. A great many artists have given us their interpretations of the pilgrims. Students might see how many illustrations they can round up for a classroom exhibit. Students who are able to draw might contribute their own interpretations.

BALLADS

The ballad is a brief narrative poem suitable for singing, of unknown authorship, and usually relating some simple story of love, courage, cruelty, or superstition. Great numbers of ballads originated and rose to popularity in England and Scotland between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries. They were handed down orally from generation to generation and in most cases were not given written or printed form until the eighteenth century. Today about three hundred ballads survive, some of them, not surprisingly, in many different versions.

While the origin of the ballads is rather shadowy, there is reason to believe that they came into being as accompaniments for folk dances. This theory is in part supported by the fact that *ballad* and *ballet* derive from the same root word. In time the two pastimes became separated, and more

attention was paid to the ballad as entertainment in its own right. Individual minstrels no doubt polished old ballads for money-making recitations in the households of the nobility or at gatherings of common people.

Judging from internal evidence, some ballads were composed to report current events of unusual interest, thus serving a purpose to be satisfied after the invention of printing by scandal sheets. Doubtless the rhymed verse form made the stories easier to remember and repeat.

Ballads are sometimes classified as folk ballads and minstrel ballads. The folk ballads, once believed to have been created spontaneously by a group of people, are now generally conceded to have had a single author, though they were no doubt circulated and "improved" upon by members of groups. The folk ballads are commonly highly



emotional, often relating a tragic love story. Folk ballads are relatively short and usually each stanza is followed by a refrain. The minstrel ballads, being composed by "professionals," are generally longer and follow a more exact verse pattern. The usual form is a four-line stanza, with the second and fourth lines rhyming. The meter is most often iambic, with the first and third lines tetrameter and the second and fourth lines trimeter.

Classified according to subject matter, there are ballads of domestic tragedy (occasionally, as in "Get Up and Bar the Door," comedy), the historical ballad, the outlaw ballad, the "coronach" or ballad of lament, and the nautical or sea ballad.

The folk ballad usually begins abruptly and tells its story rapidly, with few details. There is often much dialogue, although it is not always clear which character is speaking. Often, especially in the minstrel ballads, there is incremental repetition; that is, a phrase is repeated frequently, with some new addition each time. A refrain, sometimes meaningless, is also characteristic.

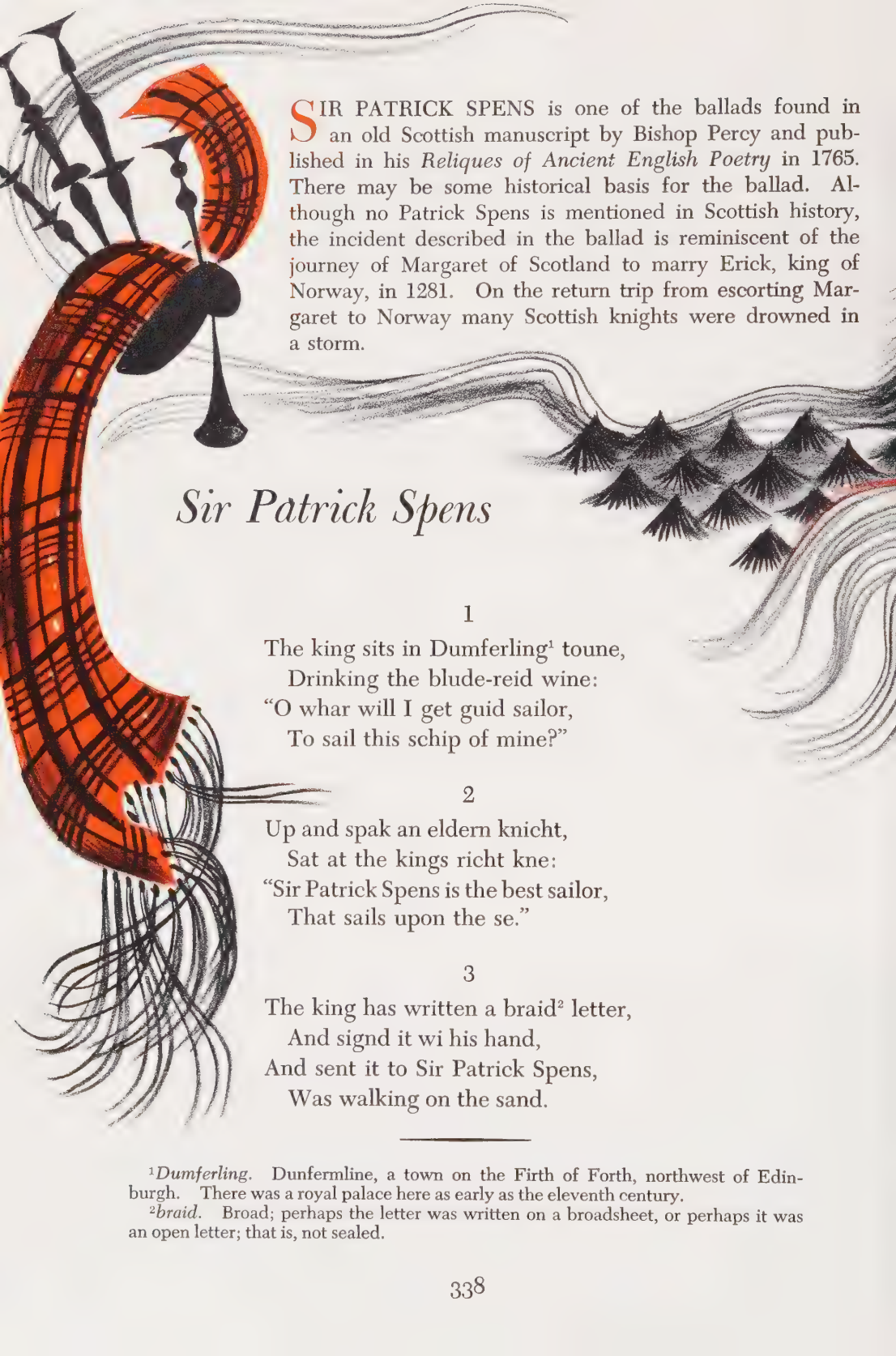
The ballad composer, unlike the modern poet, sought not to be original but

rather to cast his composition in the conventional pattern which would dissociate it from himself. The same phrases and images thus appear again and again. Wine is usually blood-red, eyes are bonny blue, ships are good, hands are lily-white, old people are silly, beds are wide (or narrow), and ladies wear golden combs in their hair. Favorite ballad numbers are three and seven. Important incidents often occur at midnight. Events are dated by feast days, Martinmas (November 11) being particularly popular.

Ballads won a place in English literature in the eighteenth century, when interest in them was revived through the efforts of Bishop Percy and Sir Walter Scott. Both men collected old manuscripts and also took down on paper ballads which they persuaded old people to recite for them. Percy published his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* in 1765. Scott published his *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* in 1802.

As examples of early, as well as the most natural and spontaneous, poetry in English literature, ballads are well worth studying. There is in the ballads a simple directness and lack of ostentation that makes them a delight.





SIR PATRICK SPENS is one of the ballads found in an old Scottish manuscript by Bishop Percy and published in his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* in 1765. There may be some historical basis for the ballad. Although no Patrick Spens is mentioned in Scottish history, the incident described in the ballad is reminiscent of the journey of Margaret of Scotland to marry Erick, king of Norway, in 1281. On the return trip from escorting Margaret to Norway many Scottish knights were drowned in a storm.

Sir Patrick Spens

1

The king sits in Dumferling¹ toune,
Drinking the blude-reid wine:
“O whar will I get guid sailor,
To sail this schip of mine?”

2

Up and spak an eldern knight,
Sat at the kings richt kne:
“Sir Patrick Spens is the best sailor,
That sails upon the se.”

3

The king has written a braid² letter,
And signd it wi his hand,
And sent it to Sir Patrick Spens,
Was walking on the sand.

¹*Dumferling*. Dunfermline, a town on the Firth of Forth, northwest of Edinburgh. There was a royal palace here as early as the eleventh century.

²*braid*. Broad; perhaps the letter was written on a broadsheet, or perhaps it was an open letter; that is, not sealed.



4

The first line that Sir Patrick red,
A loud lauch³ lauched he;
The next line that Sir Patrick red,
The teir blinded his ee.

5

“O wha is this has don this deid,
This ill deid don to me,
To send me out this time o’ the yeir,
To sail upon the se!

6

“Mak hast, mak haste, my mirry men all,
Our guid schip sails the morne:”
“O say na sae, my master deir,
For I feir a deadlie storme.

7

“Late, late yestreen I saw the new moone,
Wi the auld moone in hir arme,
And I feir, I feir, my deir master,
That we will cum to harme.”

³lauch. Laugh.





8

O our Scots nobles wer richt laith⁴
 To weet their cork-heild schoone;⁵
 Bot lang owre⁶ a' the play wer playd,
 Thair hats they swam aboone.⁷

9

O lang, lang may their ladies sit,
 Wi thair fans into their hand,
 Or eir they se Sir Patrick Spens
 Cum sailing to the land.

10

O lang, lang may the ladies stand,
 Wi thair gold kems in their hair,
 Waiting for thair ain deir lords,
 For they'll se thame na mair.

11

Haf owre, haf owre to Aberdour,⁸
 It's fiftie fadom⁹ deip,
 And thair lies guid Sir Patrick Spens,
 Wi the Scots lords at his feit.

⁴*laith*. Loath, or reluctant.

⁵*weet their cork-heild schoone*. Wet their cork-heeled shoes.

⁶*Bot lang owre*. But long before.

⁷*aboone*. Above, or on top.

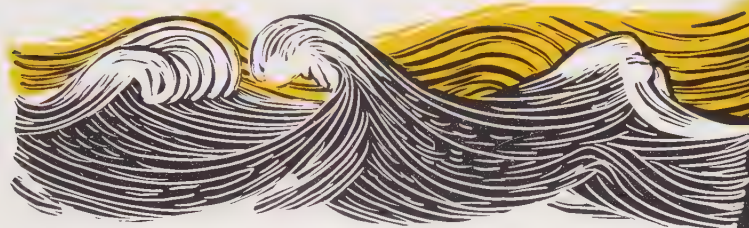
⁸*Aberdour*. Aberdeen, a city on the east coast of Scotland, about 75 miles north of Dunfermline.

⁹*fadom*. A fathom equals six feet.

Discussion

1. Why did Spens first laugh and then cry?
2. What does the ballad tell us about the character of Spens?
3. What is the first indication that the nobles were drowned?
4. Point out elements of superstition in the ballad.

SIR WALTER SCOTT wrote down this ballad as it was recited to him by an old woman in West Lothian, Scotland. Martinmas (November 11) was a time when harvesting was completed and people feasted in much the fashion of the American Thanksgiving Day. The old widow could not join in the merrymaking because she mourned her lost sons and cursed the sea that had taken them. The ghosts of the sons return, not to forbid their mother's excessive grief, as in many ballads, but apparently just to see their old home. Like all ghosts they had to return to the spirit world before the break of day. Judging from this and other ballads, Martinmas was a favorite time for spirits to return to their earthly abodes.



The Wife of Usher's Well

1

There lived a wife at Usher's Well,
And a wealthy wife was she;
She had three stout and stalwart sons,
And sent them oer the sea.

2

They hadna been a week from her,
A week but barely ane,
When word came to the carline¹ wife
That her three sons were gane.

3

They hadna been a week from her,
A week but barely three,
When word came to the carlin wife
That her sons she'd never see.

4

"I wish the wind may never cease,
Nor fashes² in the flood,
Till my three sons come hame to me,
In earthly flesh and blood."

¹carline. Old.

²fashes. Troubles; in this case storms at sea.



5

It fell about the Martinmass,³
 When nights are lang and mirk,⁴
 The carlin wife's three sons came hame,
 And their hats were o the birk.⁵

6

It neither grew in syke⁶ nor ditch,
 Not yet in ony sheugh,⁷
 But at the gates o Paradise,
 That birk grew fair enough.

7

"Blow up the fire, my maidens!
 Bring water from the well!
 For a' my house shall feast this night,
 Since my three sons are well."

8

And she has made to them a bed,
 She's made it large and wide,
 And she's ta'en her mantle her about,
 Sat down at the bed-side.

9

Up then crew the red, red cock,
 And up and crew the gray;
 The eldest to the youngest said,
 "Tis time we were away."



³*Martinmass*. The feast of St. Martin, celebrated on November 11.

⁴*mirk*. Dark. The word survives in the adjective *murky*.

⁵*birk*. Birch; perhaps they were wearing a variation of the straw hat.

⁶*syke*. Small stream.

⁷*sheugh*. Gully.

10

The cock he hadna craw'd but once,
 And clappd his wings at a',
 When the youngest to the eldest said,
 "Brother, we must awa.

11

"The cock doth crawl, the day doth daw,
 The channerin^s worm doth chide;
 Gin⁹ we be mist out o our place,
 A sair pain we maun bide.

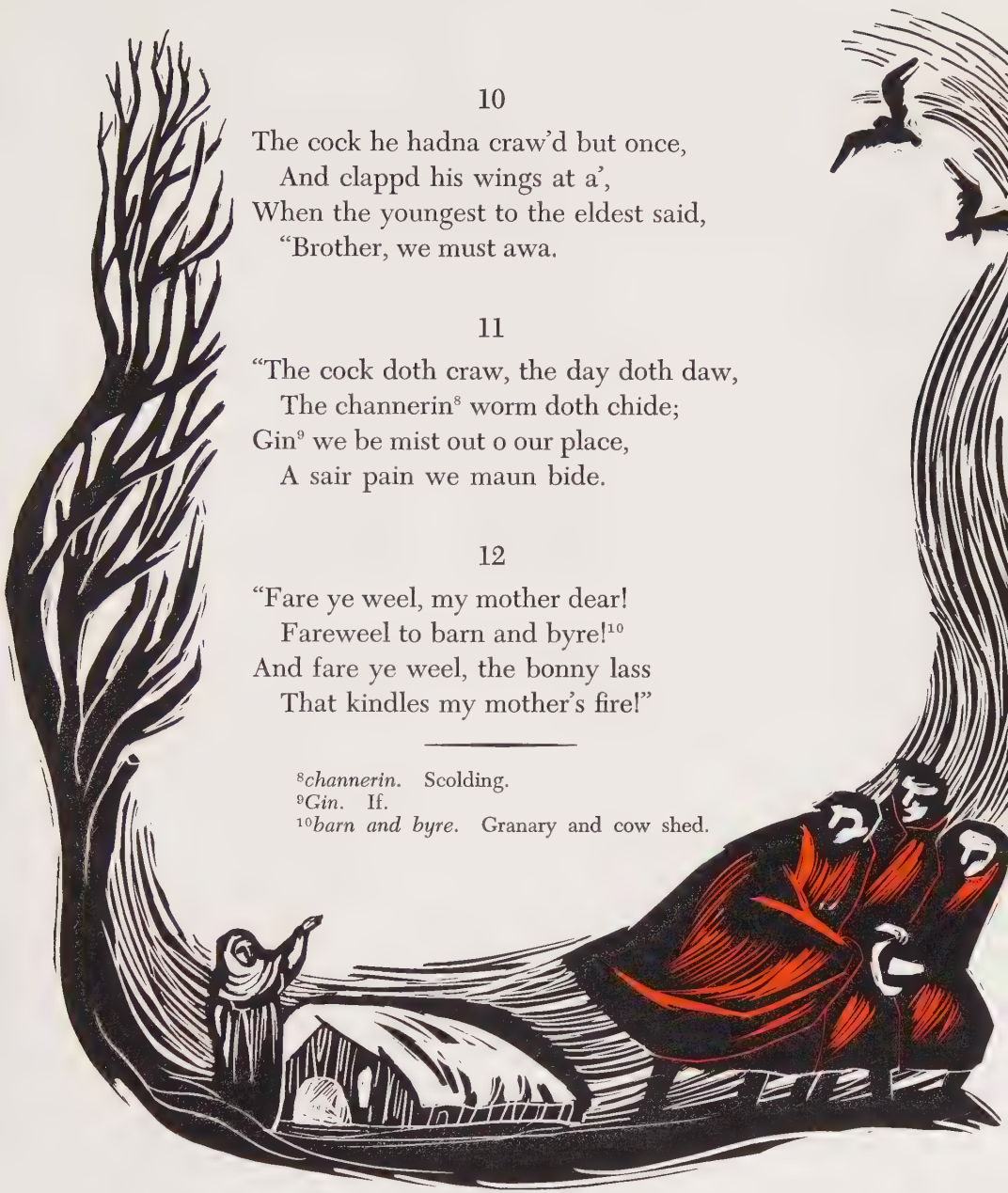
12

"Fare ye weel, my mother dear!
 Fareweel to barn and byre!¹⁰
 And fare ye weel, the bonny lass
 That kindles my mother's fire!"

^schannerin. Scolding.

⁹Gin. If.

¹⁰barn and byre. Granary and cow shed.



Discussion

1. When do we first learn that the sons are ghosts?
2. What is the significance of the crowing of the roosters?
3. How do we learn that the sons were kindly ghosts?
4. What story is suggested by the last two lines?



THIS ballad was first recorded in *Ancient and Modern Scots Songs*, published in 1769. Interestingly enough, there is an old Italian tale with the same plot. While most ballads are based on tragic events, this one indicates that such was not always the case. Arguments between husbands and wives are a very old subject for humor. The conclusion of this ballad, however, is most unusual for its time in that it is the wife who wins the argument.

Get Up and Bar the Door



It fell about the Martinmas¹ time,
And a gay time it was then,
When our goodwife got puddings to make,
And she's boild then in the pan.

The wind sae cauld blew south and north,
And blew into the floor;
Quoth our goodman to our goodwife,
"Gae out and bar the door."

"My hand is in my hussyfskap,²
Goodman, as ye may see;
An it shoud nae be barrd this hundred year,
It's no be barrd for me!"

They made a paction tween them twa,
They made it firm and sure,
That the first word whae'er shoud speak,
Should rise and bar the door.

¹*Martinmas*. The feast of St. Martin, celebrated on November 11, corresponded in spirit to the American Thanksgiving Day.

²*hussyfskap*. Housewifely chores.

Then by there came two gentlemen,
 At twelve o'clock at night,
 And they could neither see house nor hall,
 Nor coal nor candle-light.

"Now whether is this a rich man's house,
 Or whether is it a poor?"
 But neer a word would ane o them speak,
 For barring of the door.

And first they ate the white puddings,
 And then they ate the black;
 Tho muckle³ thought the goodwife to hersel,
 Yet neer a word she spake.

Then said the one unto the other,
 "Here, man, tak ye my knife;
 Do ye tak aff the auld man's beard,
 And I'll kiss the goodwife."

"But there's nae water in the house,
 And what shall we do then?"
 "What ails ye at the pudding-bree,⁴
 That boils into the pan?"

³*muckle*. Much.

⁴*What ails ye at the pudding-bree*. What's wrong with using the water in which the pudding is boiling.





O up then started our goodman,
An angry man was he:
“Will ye kiss my wife before my een,
And scad me wi pudding bree?”

Then up and started our goodwife,
Gied three skips on the floor:
“Goodman, you’ve spoken the foremost word;
Get up and bar the door.”

Discussion

1. What is the bargain which the husband and wife make?
2. What do the two strangers want? Why do they decide to shave the husband and kiss the wife?
3. What does this ballad reveal about the sense of humor of the audiences who first liked it and caused it to be repeated and remembered?

BONNY BARBARA ALLAN first appeared in print in *The Tea-Table Miscellany* in 1740, and it is this version which is included here. First known reference to the ballad is in *Pepys' Diary*. On January 2, 1666, Samuel Pepys wrote that he had "in perfect pleasure" heard Mrs. Knipp, a favorite actress of his, sing the "Scotch song of Barbary Allan." In the next century Oliver Goldsmith recorded that he had wept as a youth when he heard "our old dairy-maid" sing of "The Cruelty of Barbara Allan." The ballad was brought to the United States by early settlers and still survives in a variety of versions among the hill people of Virginia, the Carolinas, and Arkansas.

Bonny Barbara Allan

1

It was in and about the Martinmas time,¹
When the green leaves were a falling,
That Sir John Graeme, in the West Country
Fell in love with Barbara Allan.

2

He sent his man down through the town,
To the place where she was dwelling:
"O haste and come to my master dear,
Gin² ye be Barbara Allan."

3

O hooly,³ hooly rose she up,
To the place where he was lying,
And when she drew the curtain by,
"Young man, I think you're dying."

¹*Martinmas time.* November 11. As you have probably noticed the time around the feast of St. Martin seems to have been fruitful of subject matter for ballads.

²*Gin.* If.

³*hooly.* Slowly.





4

“O it’s I’m sick, and very, very sick,
And ’t is a’ for Barbara Allan:”
“O the better for me ye’s never be,
Tho your heart’s blood were a spilling.

5

“O dinna ye mind, young man,” said she,
“When ye was in the tavern a drinking,
That ye made the healths gae round and round,
And slighted Barbara Allan?”

6

He turned his face unto the wall,
And death was with him dealing:
“Adieu, adieu, my dear friends all,
And be kind to Barbara Allan.”

7

And slowly, slowly raise she up,
And slowly, slowly left him,
And sighing said, she could not stay,
Since death of life had reft him.

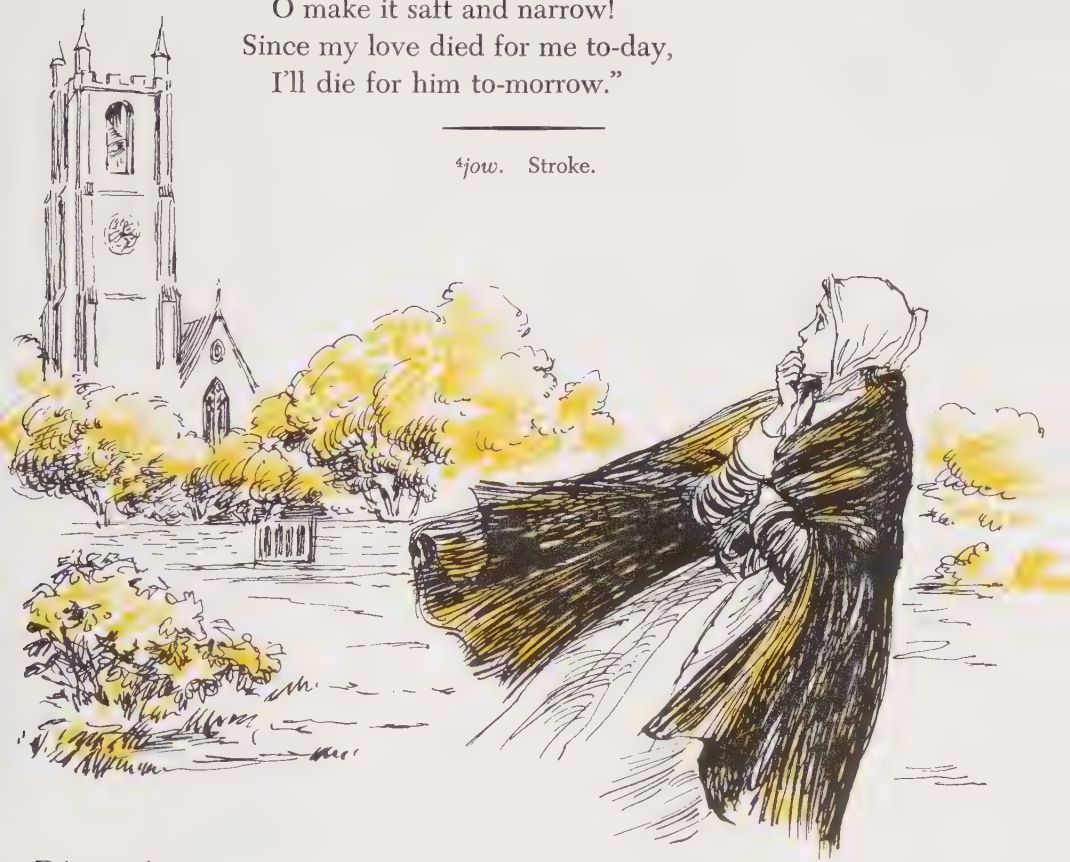
8

She had not gane a mile but twa,
 When she heard the dead-bell ringing,
 And every jow⁴ that the dead-bell geid,
 It cry'd, Woe to Barbara Allan!

9

"O mother, mother, make my bed!
 O make it saft and narrow!
 Since my love died for me to-day,
 I'll die for him to-morrow."

⁴jow. Stroke.



Discussion

1. What does it add to this ballad to have it begin at Martinmas time?
2. What sort of a girl was Barbara? Consider both what is said about her and what is not said about her.
3. Why does Barbara expect to die?
4. How do you account for the continued popularity of this ballad?



ALTHOUGH there is no evidence that Robin Hood ever existed, the numerous ballads about him made him seem so real that in 1632 a writer named Martin Parker found it profitable to write a book which he called the *True Tale of Robin Hood*. According to Parker Robin Hood was born at Locksley, in Nottingham, about 1160, and died on November 18, 1247.

The Scottish historian Fordun, who died about 1386, mentioned Robin Hood. The popular outlaw is also mentioned in the *Vision of Piers Plowman*, written about 1362. The first published collection of ballads about Robin Hood was the *Lytel Geste of Robin Hood*, printed by Wynkyn de Worde about 1490. The version included here is from *The English Archer*, published in 1786.

Robin Hood's Death

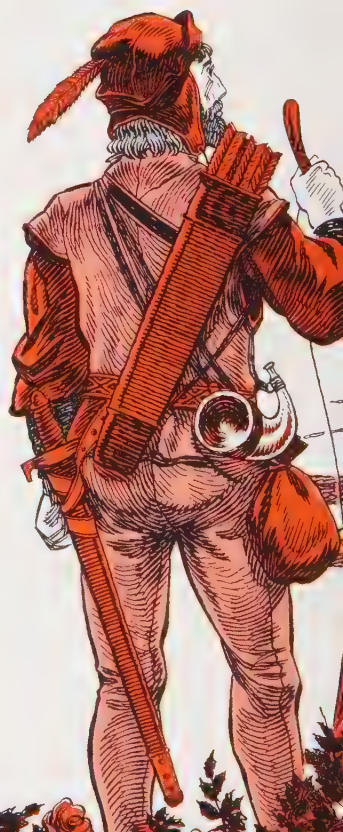
1

When Robin Hood and Little John,
Down a down, a down, a down,
Went o'er yon bank of broom,
Said Robin Hood bold to Little John,
"We have shot for many a pound."
Hey down, a down, a down.

2

"But I am not able to shoot one shot more,
My broad arrows will not flee;
But I have a cousin lives down below,
Please God, she will bleed¹ me."

¹*bleed*. Reducing a sick person's blood pressure by opening a vein was common medical practice for centuries. Convents and monasteries were the first hospitals, so it was natural for Robin Hood to seek his cousin, who was a nun.



3

Now Robin is to fair Kirkley gone,
 As fast as he can win;
 But before he came there, as we do hear,
 He was taken very ill.

4

And when he came to fair Kirkley-hall,
 He knockd all at the ring,
 But none was so ready as his cousin herself
 For to let bold Robin in.

5

"Will you please to sit down, cousin Robin,"
she said,
 "And drink some beer with me?"
 "No, I will neither eat nor drink,
 Till I am blooded by thee."

6

"Well, I have a room, cousin Robin," she said,
 "Which you did never see,
 And if you please to walk therein,
 You blooded by me shall be."

7

She took him by the lily-white hand,
 And led him to a private room,
 And there she blooded bold Robin Hood,
 While one drop of blood would run down.

8

She blooded him in a vein of the arm,
 And locked him up in the room;
 There did he bleed all the livelong day,
 Until the next day at noon.





9

He then bethought him of a casement there,
Thinking for to get down;
But was so weak he could not leap,
He could not get him down.

10

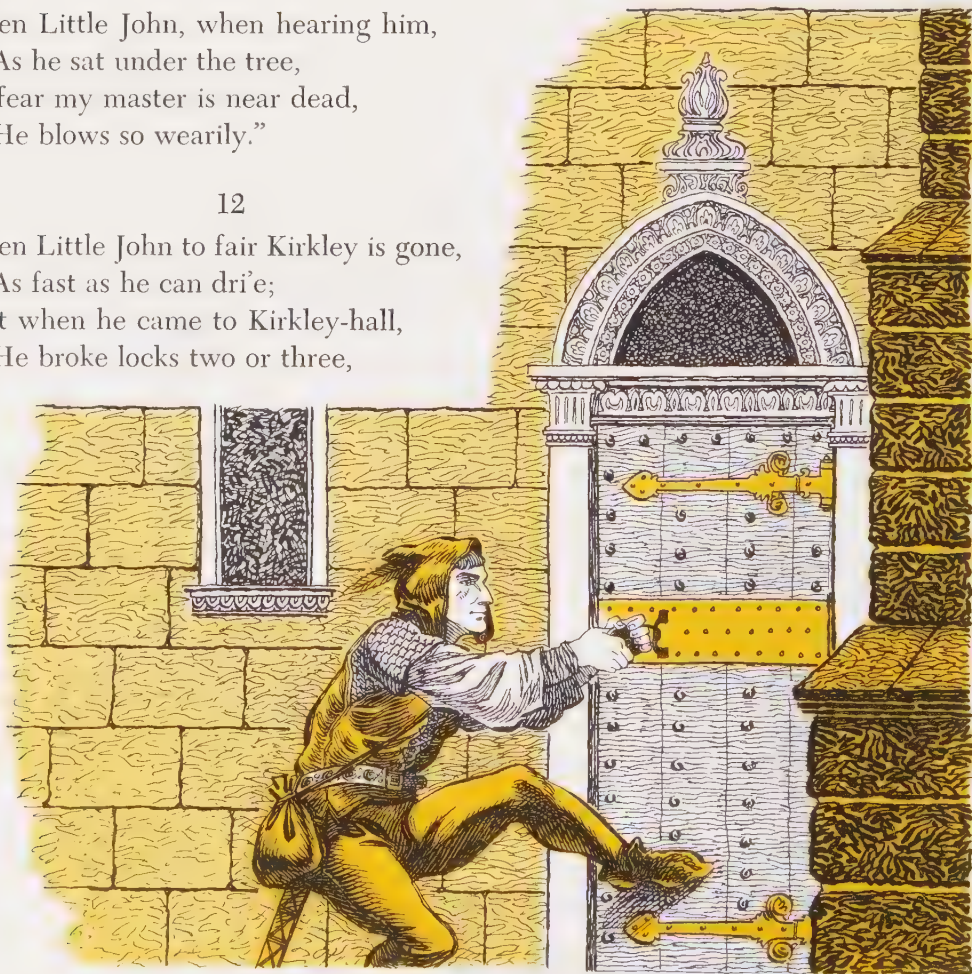
He then bethought him of his bugle-horn,
Which hung low down to his knee;
He set his horn unto his mouth,
And blew out weak blasts three.

11

Then Little John, when hearing him,
As he sat under the tree,
"I fear my master is near dead,
He blows so wearily."

12

Then Little John to fair Kirkley is gone,
As fast as he can dri'e;
But when he came to Kirkley-hall,
He broke locks two or three,



13

Until he came bold Robin to,
 Then he fell on his knee.
 "A boon, a boon," cries Little John,
 "Master, I beg of thee."

14

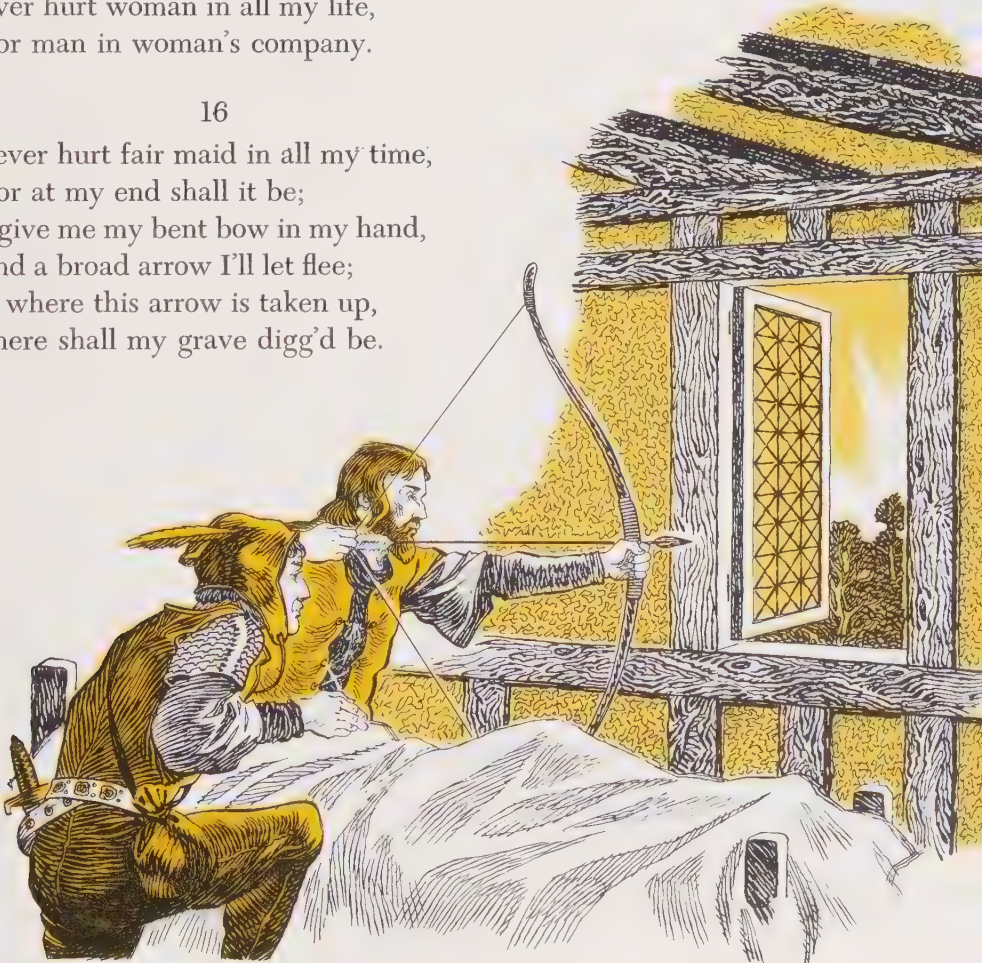
"What is that boon," quoth Robin Hood,
 "Little John, thou begs of me?"
 "It is to burn fair Kirkley-hall,
 And all their nunnery."

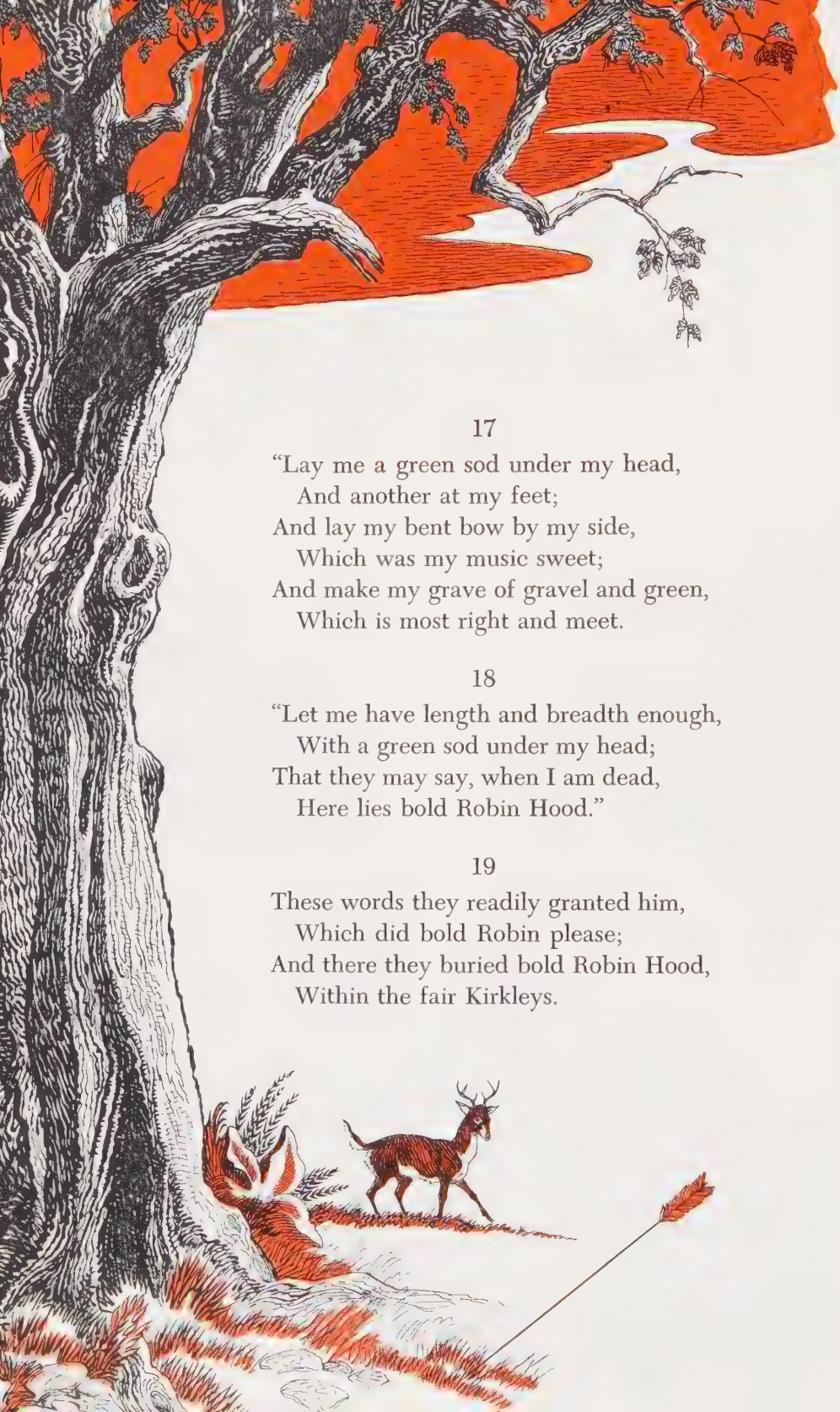
15

"Now nay, now nay," quoth Robin Hood,
 "That boon I'll not grant thee;
 I never hurt woman in all my life,
 Nor man in woman's company."

16

"I never hurt fair maid in all my time,
 Nor at my end shall it be;
 But give me my bent bow in my hand,
 And a broad arrow I'll let flee;
 And where this arrow is taken up,
 There shall my grave digg'd be."





17

"Lay me a green sod under my head,
And another at my feet;
And lay my bent bow by my side,
Which was my music sweet;
And make my grave of gravel and green,
Which is most right and meet.

18

"Let me have length and breadth enough,
With a green sod under my head;
That they may say, when I am dead,
Here lies bold Robin Hood."

19

These words they readily granted him,
Which did bold Robin please;
And there they buried bold Robin Hood,
Within the fair Kirkleys.

Discussion

1. Why did Robin Hood go to Kirkley?
2. Why did it take him so long to realize he was bleeding to death?
3. How do you account for his cousin's wish to kill him?
4. Why won't Robin Hood let Little John burn the nunnery?
5. What makes this seem an appropriate end for Robin Hood?

BALLAD REVIEW

Discussion

(If necessary, reread the introduction to ballads, pp. 336-337.)

1. Point out in the ballads just read examples of (a) abrupt beginnings, (b) confusing dialogue, (c) refrains, (d) incremental repetition, (e) ballad phrases.
2. What similarities do you see between the ballads and the entertainment available today on radio and television?
3. Give a brief synopsis of the plot of each of the ballads. Which of these plots have you encountered recently in modern dress?
4. What characteristics of the ballads entitle them to be considered as literature?

Research

1. To broaden your acquaintance with ballads look up Sargent and Kittredge's *English and Scottish Popular Ballads*. If time permits, select several ballads to read aloud to your classmates.
2. America has its ballads, too. Your school or public library probably has Carl Sandburg's *American Songbag*. What similarities do you note between American ballads and the English and Scottish ballads you have just studied?
3. There are many regional ballads, some of which have been collected and published. You might find it fun to track down the ballads of your own state and region.
4. The ballad verse form is easy to imitate. If you like to write verse, try your hand at an original ballad, based perhaps on some event reported in your local or school newspaper.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

SONGS FROM THE PLAYS

SOME of the most beautiful lyrics in English literature are included in Shakespeare's plays. Three of the most famous are reprinted here. "Hark, Hark! the Lark" is from *Cymbeline*, Act II, scene iii, where it serves as a serenade to waken the Lady Imogen. Of all the musical settings created for this poem, that of Franz Schubert is generally considered the loveliest.

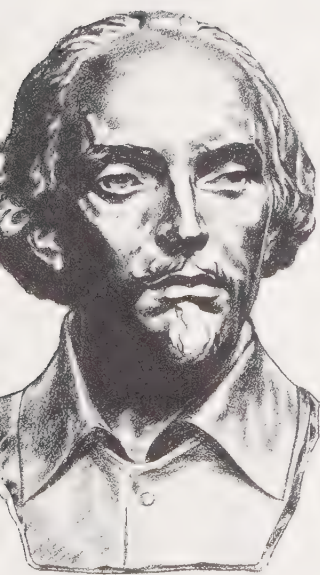
Another lyric, still often sung, is "Who Is Silvia?" from *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. It appears in Act IV, scene ii, where it serves as part of Proteus' campaign to gain the attention of Silvia, daughter of the Duke of Milan. Set to music by at least twenty different composers, the most famous is the one by Schubert.

"O Mistress Mine" is from *Twelfth Night*, Act II, scene iii. In one of the rowdiest scenes in any of Shakespeare's comedies, Sir Toby Belch and Sir Andrew Aguecheek request a love-song, and Feste, the clown, obliges. "O Mistress Mine" is one of the few sixteenth century songs for which the original music still survives.

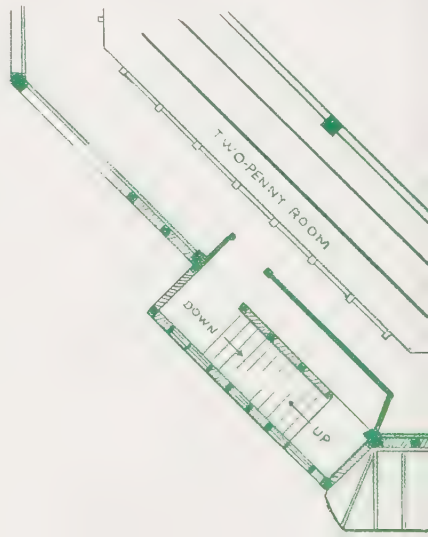
SONNETS

Shakespeare's sonnets established an important tradition in English poetry. The sonnet is a brief lyric, rather formal in pattern, consisting of fourteen lines of five-foot iambic meter. In general the sonnet follows one of two rhyme schemes.

The sonnet originated in Italy, where it was popularized by Petrarch. Sir Thomas Wyatt introduced the form to



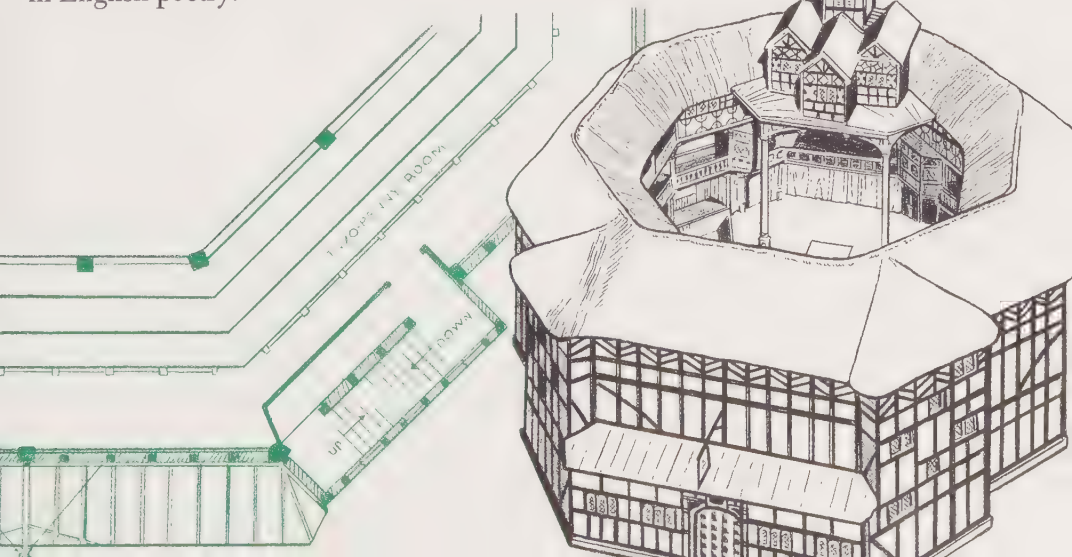
William Shakespeare



England in his translations of Petrarch. It was Sir Philip Sidney, however, who naturalized the form, so to speak, with his sonnet sequence, *Astrophel and Stella*, in 1591. This form, still called the Petrarchan sonnet, makes an eight-six division of lines, with a rhyme scheme of *abba, abba*, and either *cdcdcd* or *cdecde*. After Sidney, Milton was the first notable writer of Petrarchan sonnets in English.

With the genius evident in everything he touched, Shakespeare transformed the sonnet to the form that still bears his name. The Shakespearean sonnet consists of three quatrains and a couplet, rhyming *abab, cdcd, efef*, and *gg*, the final couplet serving as a summary of the thought, often as an epigram.

Sonnet sequences, usually dealing with love and disillusionment, were a fad in the latter part of the sixteenth century. None, however, equal Shakespeare's in their perfect harmony of thought, choice of words, and verse form. Shakespeare's 154 sonnets were probably written between 1593 and 1603, although they were not published until 1609. The sonnets are addressed in part to a man, in part to a woman, but neither has ever been satisfactorily identified. Some scholars think the man was the Earl of Southampton; others that it was the Earl of Pembroke. Both men were friends of Shakespeare. Some claim the woman was Mary Fitton, maid of honor to Queen Elizabeth I. Whether or not Shakespeare had specific people in mind is of no real importance. His thoughts on the joys and sorrows of friendship and love are universal in their application, and the workmanship of the sonnets is as near perfect as anything in English poetry.





Hark, Hark! the Lark

Hark, hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
And Phoebus¹ 'gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
On chaliced flowers that lies;
And winking Mary-buds begin
To ope their golden eyes.
With every thing that pretty is,
My lady sweet, arise!
Arise, arise!

¹*Phoebus*. Another name for Apollo, the Greek god of the sun.

Discussion

1. Summarize the thought of the poem in a single sentence.
2. What is the figure of speech in lines 5 and 6?

Research

1. Franz Schubert and other composers have set most of the songs from Shakespeare's plays to music. Perhaps with the help of the music department you could arrange a classroom concert.
2. The lark appears frequently in English poetry and might be the subject of an interesting research paper. Make your starting point the index of whatever dictionaries of quotations your library has.

Who Is Silvia?

Who is Silvia? What is she,
That all our swains commend her?
Holy, fair, and wise is she;
The heaven such grace did lend her,
That she might admirèd be.



Is she kind as she is fair?
For beauty lives with kindness.
Love doth to her eyes repair,
To help him of his blindness,¹
And, being helped, inhabits there.

Then to Silvia let us sing,
That Silvia is excelling;
She excels each mortal thing
Upon the dull earth dwelling:
To her let us garlands bring.

¹*his blindness.* Cupid, the god of love in Roman mythology, is generally represented as blindfolded. In *The Merchant of Venice* Shakespeare wrote, "Love is blind."

Discussion

1. What question is asked in the first stanza? How is it answered?
2. What question is asked in the second stanza? How is it answered?
3. What is the relation of the final stanza to the rest of the poem?
4. In the play this song is sung outside Silvia's window. If you did not know this, what clues in the poem would lead you to conclude it was not sung in her presence?

O Mistress Mine



O Mistress mine, where are you roaming?
O stay and hear! your true love's coming
That can sing both high and low;
'Trip no further, pretty sweeting,
Journeys end in lovers' meeting—
Every wise man's son doth know.

What is love? 'tis not hereafter;
Present mirth hath present laughter;
What's to come is still unsure;
In delay there lies no plenty,—
Then come kiss me, Sweet-and-twenty,
Youth's a stuff will not endure.

Discussion

1. How does the spirit of this song differ from that of the two preceding songs?
2. What is it that “every wise man's son doth know”? Why the son rather than the father?
3. What question is asked in the second stanza? How is it answered? How does the dictionary answer the question? In what sense is Shakespeare more profound than the dictionary?

Research

You might look ahead to the Cavalier Poets on page 370. What ideas do their poems have in common with “O Mistress Mine”? List for a brief report as many specific similarities as you can find.

Sonnet 18

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimmed:
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance, or nature's changing course, untrimmed.
But thy eternal summer shall not fade
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;
Nor shall death brag thou wanderest in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou growest:
 So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
 So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

Discussion

1. What aspects of summer does Shakespeare mention? How does this answer the question in line 1?
2. What is the meaning of "every fair from fair sometime declines"?
3. What is the thought in the last two lines?
4. Point out the relationship between thought and verse form.

Research

1. To become better acquainted with both Shakespeare and the sonnet form supplement your class work with some additional reading. Among the more famous of Shakespeare's sonnets are numbers 30, 33, 35, 71, 73, 104, 106, 109, 116, 144.
2. Sonnet 18 is included in Album One of *Master Recordings in English Literature*. If your school or public library has this collection of recordings, you will want to make use of it from time to time to enrich your appreciation of lyric poetry.



Sonnet 29

When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes
I all alone beweepe my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself, and curse my fate;
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,
Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on thee—and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;
For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

Discussion

1. What universal wishes does Shakespeare give voice to in the first eight lines?
2. Point out words which contribute to the gloomy mood.
3. When the poet is most gloomy, what thought can lift his spirits?
4. What is the figure of speech involving the lark? Why is it so effective? Where else has Shakespeare made reference to the lark?
5. Point out phrases in the last three lines which counterbalance phrases earlier in the poem.

JOHN DONNE was born in London, the son of a prosperous hardware merchant. He attended both Oxford and Cambridge and made a notable record as a scholar. After college he studied law in London, at the same time leading a wild life, according to Izaak Walton, who later wrote his biography. Although brought up a Catholic, Donne left the Church of Rome and joined the Church of England. Under the Earl of Essex he took part in the daring expedition which captured the Spanish port of Cadiz in 1596.

Upon his return to England Donne became secretary to Sir Thomas Egerton, the Lord Keeper of the Great Seal. Through him he met and fell in love with Sir Thomas' niece, Anne More. They were secretly married in 1601, when she was seventeen. Anne's father was indignant and managed to get Donne dismissed and even for a brief time imprisoned. This unhappy development led John to comment to his bride in a bitter pun, "John Donne, Anne Donne, Un-done." They remained, however, a devoted and happy couple.

After a dozen years of trying to get ahead politically, Donne was persuaded by King James I to take holy orders in 1615. He rose rapidly in the Church and came to be considered the most eloquent preacher of his time. In 1621 Donne was appointed to the high post of Dean of St. Paul's.

In later years, after the death of his wife, Donne became obsessed with thoughts of death and often wrote on the subject. His sonnet to Death is generally considered his greatest poem. In his last illness he had himself swathed in a winding-sheet and posed for the statue which can be seen today over his tomb in St. Paul's cathedral.

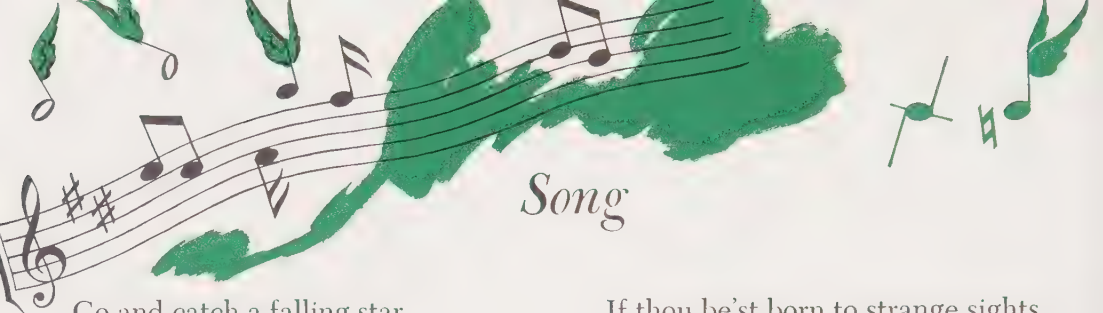
Donne's poems are original, emphatic, and wilfully contrary. Their appeal is intellectual and the thought is subtle and involved. His love poems, mostly written before he was twenty-five, are markedly cynical, in sharp contrast to the usual Elizabethan romanticism.

With a few exceptions Donne's poems were not printed during his lifetime, but circulated in manuscript among his friends and admirers. There has been a revival of interest in Donne's poetry in modern times, and his influence is evident in the work of a number of contemporary poets, most notably T. S. Eliot.



1572-1631

JOHN DONNE



Song

Go and catch a falling star,
Get with child a mandrake root,¹
Tell me where all past years are,
Or who cleft the devil's foot;
Teach me to hear mermaids singing,
To keep off envy's stinging,
And find
What wind
Serves to advance an honest mind.

If thou be'st born to strange sights,
Things invisible to see,
Ride ten thousand days and nights
Till Age snow white hairs on thee;
Thou, when thou return'st, wilt tell me
All strange wonders that befell thee,
And swear
No where
Lives a woman true and fair.

If thou find'st one, let me know;
Such a pilgrimage were sweet.
Yet do not; I would not go,
Though at next door we might meet.
Though she were true when you met her,
And last till you write your letter,
Yet she
Will be
False, ere I come, to two or three.

¹*mandrake root.* The forked root of the mandrake gives it some resemblance to the human form.

Discussion

1. How does the first line establish the spirit of the poem?
2. What comparisons does Donne use to illustrate the difficulty of finding "a woman true and fair"?
3. Under what circumstances might you temporarily agree with Donne's views in this poem?
4. In what sense is the whole poem an example of hyperbole?
5. What would be the effect on the poem if Donne's exaggerations were toned down?

Research

"Song" is only one of many sophisticated, rather cynical poems that Donne wrote. Sometime when you share this mood, you might enjoy reading "The Indifferent," "Love's Deity," "The Will," or "The Funeral."

Meditation 17

No man is an *Iland*, intire of itself; every man is a peece of the *Continent*, a part of the *maine*; if a *Clod* bee washed away by the *Sea*, *Europe* is the lesse, as well as if a *Promontorie* were, as well as if a *Mannor* of thy *friends* or of *thine owne* were; any mans *death* diminishes *me*, because I am involved in *Mankinde*; And therefore never send to know for whom the *bell* tolls; It tolls for *thee*.

Discussion

1. What is the concept or idea expressed in the first two lines? What connection do you see between this concept and the expression "one world"?
2. Does Donne's viewpoint strike you as optimistic or pessimistic? How do you justify your opinion?
3. Do you think man is naturally self-centered, or is this an acquired characteristic? Teenagers are sometimes criticized for being excessively gregarious. What is your opinion of this charge?
4. "Meditation 17" is poetical in the sense that the King James version of the Bible is poetical. What is the quality that is lost when Donne's thought is paraphrased?

Research

If you would like to read a rather mature novel, you might find it interesting to discover why Ernest Hemingway chose to title his book about the Spanish Civil War *For Whom the Bell Tolls*.



Death

Death, be not proud, though some have callèd thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;
For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow
Die not, poor Death; nor yet canst thou kill me.
From Rest and Sleep, which but thy picture be,
Much pleasure; then from thee much more must flow;
And soonest our best men with thee do go—
Rest of their bones and souls' delivery!
Thou'rt slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell;
And poppy¹ or charms can make us sleep as well
And better than thy stroke. Why swell'st² thou then?
One short sleep past, we wake eternally,
And Death shall be no more. Death, thou shalt die!

¹*poppy*. Opium is derived from poppy juice.

²*swell'st*. Swell with pride.

Discussion

1. Why do some people call death “mighty and dreadful”?
2. Which lines later in the poem explain lines 3 and 4?
3. On what does Donne base his conclusion that death must be pleasant?
4. Why does Donne call death “slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men”? Explain each.
5. What is the meaning of the last two lines?

Research

One of the earliest biographies in English literature is Izaak Walton's *Life of Dr. John Donne*. If you can borrow this book from a public or university library, you will find it interesting reading. Select one or two characteristic incidents from Donne's life to relate to your classmates.

BEN JONSON was born in the village of Westminster, now a part of London. His father, a minister, died before Ben was born. Several years later his mother married a bricklayer. Ben was sent to Westminster School, after which he followed his stepfather's trade for a time. Not liking bricklaying, he joined the army and saw several years of service fighting the Spanish in Flanders. He returned to London about 1592 and apparently soon thereafter joined a company of actors. We do not know when he began to write, but we do know that one of his best comedies, *Every Man in His Humour*, was produced in 1598, with Shakespeare in the cast. The same year Jonson was imprisoned and came near hanging for killing an actor in a duel.

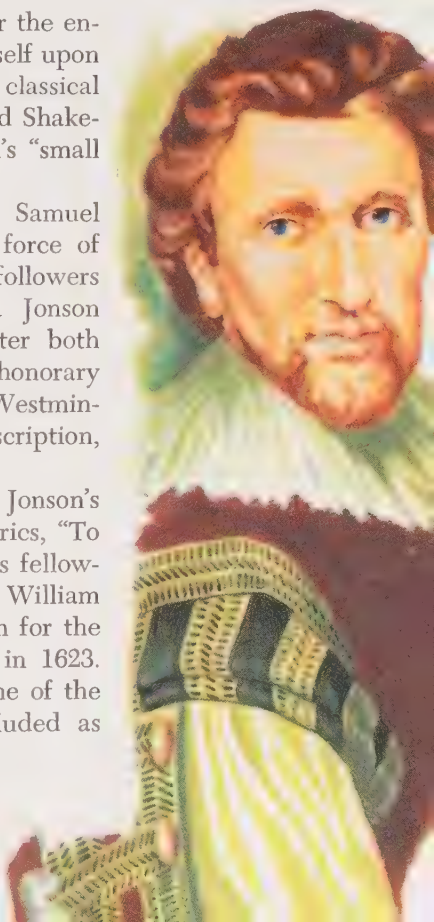
Rivaled only by Shakespeare and Marlowe, Jonson turned out a great many plays during the next thirty years, among them *Volpone*, *The Alchemist*, *Bartholomew Fair*, *A Tale of a Tub*, *Catiline*, and *The Masque of Kings*. The last named was one of many masques Jonson wrote for the entertainment of the royal court. Jonson prided himself upon his classical knowledge and upon preserving the classical unities in his plays. Much as he liked and admired Shakespeare he couldn't resist remarking upon his rival's "small Latin and less Greek."

Jonson became a sort of literary dictator, as Samuel Johnson was to be later. His opinions had the force of law among the "Sons of Ben," as his younger followers called themselves. In 1616 James I appointed Jonson England's first Poet Laureate, and soon thereafter both Cambridge and Oxford universities granted him honorary degrees. When Jonson died, he was buried in Westminster Abbey. The slab over his tomb, with the inscription, "O Rare Ben Jonson," may still be seen there.

Aside from some short pieces from his plays, Jonson's fame as a poet rests largely upon the beautiful lyrics, "To Celia" and "Hymn to Diana," and his tribute to his fellow-dramatist, "To the Memory of My Beloved Master William Shakespeare, and What He Hath Left Us," written for the first collection of Shakespeare's plays, published in 1623. Jonson also wrote a number of poetic epitaphs, one of the best, "Epitaph on Elizabeth, L. H.," being included as Number cxxiv in his *Epigrams*, published in 1616.

BEN JONSON

1573-1637



To Celia¹



Drink to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine;
Or leave a kiss but in the cup
And I'll not look for wine.
The thirst that from the soul doth rise
Doth ask a drink divine;
But might I of Jove's nectar² sup,
I would not change for thine.

I sent thee late a rosy wreath,
Not so much honoring thee
As giving it a hope that there
It could not withered be;
But thou thereon didst only breathe,
And sent'st it back to me;
Since when it grows, and smells, I swear,
Not of itself but thee!

¹*Celia*. In the Elizabethan period Celia was considered a poetic name and many love lyrics made use of it. Jonson used the name for one of the characters in his play *Volpone*, as did Shakespeare in his play *As You Like It*.

²*Jove's nectar*. Jove is another name for Jupiter, chief god in Roman mythology. Nectar was the drink of the gods, which made them immortal.

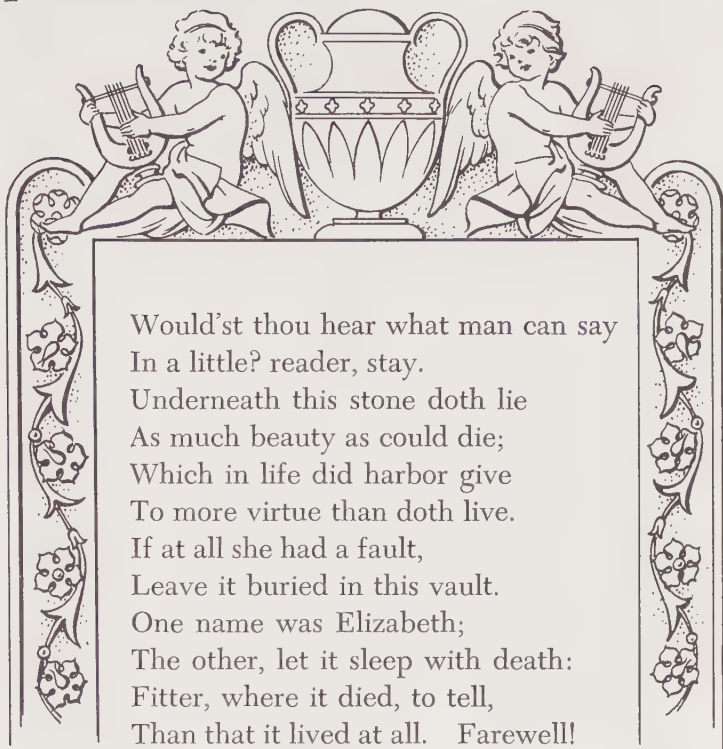
Discussion

1. What variation upon the custom of toasting does Jonson propose in the first stanza?
2. What is the compliment paid to Celia in the second stanza?
3. What courting customs of the time are referred to in the poem? Suggest one or two modern counterparts.

Research

1. Be sure to enjoy this poem in its musical setting. Perhaps it is, or could be, included in the repertoire of your choir or glee club. The song is also available on a number of records.
2. You might like to look ahead to the writings of the Cavalier Poets, who were great admirers of Ben Jonson. What similarities can you find between "To Celia" and the love poems of the Cavaliers?

Epitaph on Elizabeth, L. H.



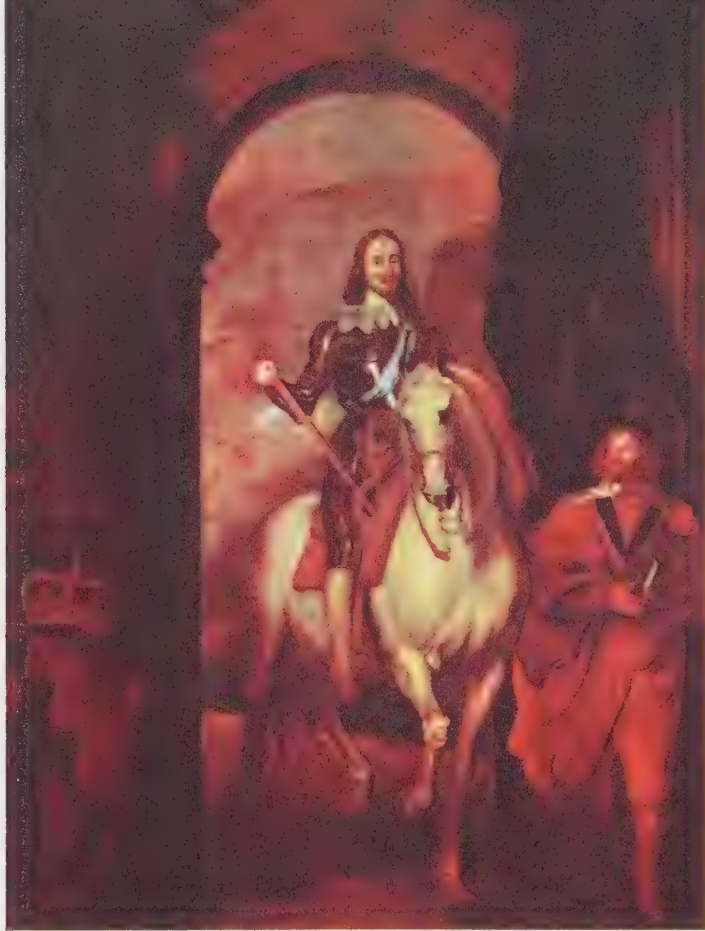
Would'st thou hear what man can say
In a little? reader, stay.
Underneath this stone doth lie
As much beauty as could die;
Which in life did harbor give
To more virtue than doth live.
If at all she had a fault,
Leave it buried in this vault.
One name was Elizabeth;
The other, let it sleep with death:
Fitter, where it died, to tell,
Than that it lived at all. Farewell!

Discussion

1. How beautiful does Jonson claim Elizabeth was?
2. How virtuous does he say she was?
3. What do you think the last three lines mean?

Research

1. If you have missed *Spoon River Anthology* by the American poet Edgar Lee Masters, now would be an appropriate time to look it up. How do Masters' epitaphs compare with Jonson's? Select your favorite poem from *Spoon River* to read aloud to your classmates.
2. A little time spent in a good library might produce material for an interesting paper on poetic epitaphs. Jonson wrote a number of other epitaphs which you might use as a starting point. Another type of paper might grow out of a visit to a cemetery, especially an old one. Be sure to copy the dates correctly. Perhaps you can draw some conclusions about changing fashions in epitaphs.



THE CAVALIER POETS

Originally meaning a horse-soldier, the term *cavalier* came to mean a courtly gentleman, and then in the Civil War, capitalized, the name came to stand for the followers of Charles I in his fight against the Roundhead army of Oliver Cromwell. At the court of Charles I a group of young poets who displayed a dashing quality in their lives and in their verses came to be known as the Cavalier Poets.

Skillful in the handling of poetic form, the Cavalier Poets wrote on such courtly themes as love and war and loyalty to the king. Although often

flippant, and sometimes cynical, they were men of sense and courage, too. Living in uncertain times and realizing the transiency of youth and beauty and life itself, it is not strange that their motto should seem to be "Gather ye rose-buds while ye may." The best poet in the group was Robert Herrick. Others were George Wither (briefly), Thomas Carew, Sir John Suckling, and Richard Lovelace. In the form their poetry took all the Cavalier Poets were influenced by Ben Jonson (see page 367), an indebtedness Herrick avowed in one of the following poems.

GEORGE WITHER was born in Hampshire and was educated at Oxford University. Coming to London as a young man he was introduced at court, where his light-hearted poetry won him favor. Because of a poem interpreted as criticizing the lord chancellor, Wither was imprisoned briefly. It was while in prison he wrote his best-known poem, "Shall I, Wasting in Despair." The poem first appeared in a volume titled *Fidelia*, published in 1615. In 1621 Wither was again imprisoned on a charge of libel. On his release he joined the Puritan cause and turned his talents to religious poetry. He still supported Charles I and served as a captain in the Royal army in 1639. When Civil War broke out in 1641, however, Wither sided with Parliament and very soon he became a major-general in Cromwell's army. Upon the Restoration of Charles II in 1660 Wither was imprisoned. He was released three years later and died in London in 1667.



Shall I, Wasting in Despair

Shall I, wasting in despair,
 Die, because a woman's fair?
 Or make pale my cheeks with care,
 'Cause another's rosy are?
 Be she fairer than the day,
 Or the flowery meads in May,
 If she be not so to me,
 What care I how fair she be?

Should my heart be grieved or pined,
 'Cause I see a woman kind?
 Or a well-disposed nature
 Joinèd with a lovely feature?
 Be she meeker, kinder than
 Turtle dove, or pelican,
 If she be not so to me,
 What care I how kind she be?

Shall a woman's virtues move
 Me to perish for her love?
 Or her well-deserving known,
 Make me quite forget mine own?
 Be she with that goodness blest
 Which may gain her name of best,
 If she be not such to me,
 What care I how good she be?



'Cause her fortune seems too high,
Shall I play the fool and die?
Those that bear a noble mind,
Where they want of riches find,
Think, "What, with them, they would do
That, without them, dare to woo!"
And unless that mind I see,
What care I though great she be?

Great, or good, or kind, or fair,
I will ne'er the more despair!
If she love me (this believe!)
I will die, ere she shall grieve;
If she slight me when I woo,
I can scorn, and let her go;
For if she be not for me,
What care I for whom she be?

Discussion

- In each of the first four stanzas Wither mentions a characteristic that may make a woman attractive. Explain each briefly.
- What is Wither's final conclusion about falling in love?
- Why do you think the last two lines of each stanza are indented?

ROBERT HERRICK 1591–1674

ROBERT HERRICK was born in London, the son of a goldsmith. He attended Cambridge University, where he studied law. Returning to London he joined the gay circle surrounding Charles I and became a leader among the young poets and wits who called themselves “Sons of Ben.” Like his companions, but with greater skill, Herrick turned out a quantity of lyrics expressing his enthusiasm for life, but colored with regret for fleeting youth, love, and beauty.

Rather surprisingly Herrick in 1627 entered the ministry. Two years later he went to Devonshire as rector of a country church, and there he spent eighteen years, faithfully carrying out his pastoral duties and writing poetry in his spare time. Under the Commonwealth Herrick was removed from his post, but it was again restored to him when Charles II returned to the throne.

A collection of Herrick’s poetry was published in 1647 under the title *Hesperides*. His poems fall into three classes: nature poems, love lyrics, and religious poems. Little regarded in his own day, Herrick’s poems were rediscovered in the nineteenth century and have been rated highly ever since.



An Ode for Ben Jonson



Ah, Ben!
Say how or when
Shall we, thy guests,
Meet at those lyric feasts,
Made at the Sun,
The Dog, the Triple Tun;
Where we such clusters had,
As made us nobly wild, not mad?
And yet each verse of thine
Out-did the meat, out-did the frolic wine.


My Ben!
Or come again,
Or send to us
Thy wit's great overplus;
But teach us yet
Wisely to husband it,
Lest we that talent spend;
And having once brought to an end
That precious stock, the store
Of such a wit the world should have no more.

Discussion

1. What does Herrick gain by arranging this poem in the form of two pyramids?
2. What different compliment does Herrick pay Jonson in each stanza?
3. What is the meaning of the phrase, "thy wit's great overplus"?
4. What characteristics of Jonson made him popular with the Cavalier poets?



To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time




Gather ye rose-buds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying;
And this same flower that smiles to-day
To-morrow will be dying.

The glorious Lamp of Heaven, the Sun,
The higher he's a-getting
The sooner will his race be run,
And nearer he's to setting.

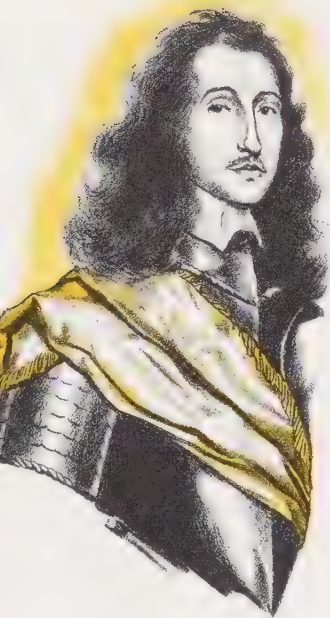
That age is best which is the first,
When youth and blood are warmer;
But being spent, the worse, and worst
Times, still succeed the former.

Then be not coy, but use your time;
And while ye may, go marry:
For having lost but once your prime,
You may for ever tarry.



Discussion

1. What do you think the rose-buds symbolize in the first stanza?
2. What comparison is implied in the second stanza?
3. Into what three ages does Herrick divide life? Do you agree with him? Name some groups of people who would probably not agree.
4. What is the advice in the last stanza? What apparently is Herrick's definition of "prime"? What other meanings could this word have for other people?



RICHARD LOVELACE

1618–1658

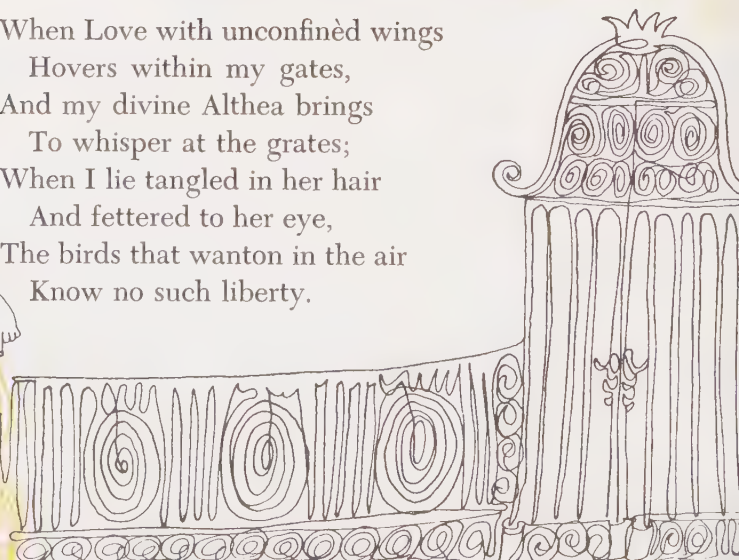
RICHARD LOVELACE was born at Woolwich, in Kent. His family had a long tradition of military service, and his father was killed in battle when Richard was ten. Young Lovelace attended Oxford University and then entered the service of Charles I. He was imprisoned by Parliament in 1642 for presenting a Royalist petition on behalf of the king. It was during this imprisonment he wrote what was to become his most famous poem, "To Althea, from Prison." After seven weeks he was released on bail, but he remained a prisoner on parole throughout the Civil War.

Through his brothers Lovelace contributed financially to the king's cause, and in 1645 he went to France to seek military aid for Charles. While in France he took part in the siege of Dunkirk, and when he returned to England in 1648 he was immediately imprisoned again. During this term in prison he collected and revised his earlier poems. They were published in a volume titled *Lucasta* in 1649. After Charles' execution Lovelace was released. He spent the last ten years of his life in poverty, having devoted his entire fortune to the service of his beloved king.

Lovelace's best poems abound in chivalrous feelings and noble thoughts. As a comparison of the early and later versions of the poems reveals, their apparent spontaneity was the result of frequent and painstaking revision.

To Althea, from Prison

When Love with unconfined wings
Hovers within my gates,
And my divine Althea brings
To whisper at the grates;
When I lie tangled in her hair
And fettered to her eye,
The birds that wanton in the air
Know no such liberty.



When flowing cups run swiftly round
 With no allaying Thames,¹
 Our careless heads with roses bound,
 Our hearts with loyal flames;
 When thirsty grief in wine we steep,
 When healths and drafts go free—
 Fishes that tinkle in the deep
 Know no such liberty.

When—like committed linnets²—I
 With shriller throat shall sing
 The sweetness, mercy, majesty
 And glories of my King;³
 When I shall voice aloud how good
 He is, how great should be,
 Enlargèd winds, that curl the flood,
 Know no such liberty.

Stone walls do not a prison make,
 Nor iron bars a cage;
 Minds innocent and quiet take
 That for an hermitage;
 If I have freedom in my love,
 And in my soul am free,
 Angels alone, that soar above,
 Enjoy such liberty.



¹*no allaying Thames.* He doesn't want his wine diluted with water.
²*committed linnets.* The linnet is a songbird often kept caged in the seventeenth century.
³*my King.* Charles I.

Discussion

What liberty does the poet enjoy in the first stanza? In the second? In the third? Which of these might a prisoner today enjoy?

- 2 The first two lines of the last stanza are often quoted. What do they mean?

According to the last stanza what two things make life worthwhile even in prison?



To Lucasta, on Going to the Wars

Tell me not, Sweet, I am unkind
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind,
To war and arms I fly.

True, a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field;
And with a stronger faith embrace
A sword, a horse, a shield.

Yet this inconstancy is such
As you too shall adore;
I could not love thee, Dear, so much,
Loved I not Honour more.



Discussion

1. Against what charge is Lovelace defending himself in the first stanza?
2. What argument does Lovelace advance in the first two lines of the last stanza? What makes this argument unanswerable?
3. The last two lines are often quoted. What do they mean? In what way are they a compliment? Could they apply to other occasions besides war?

REVIEW OF THE CAVALIER POETS

Discussion

1. Quote lines which show that the Cavalier Poets were "glad to be alive."
2. What different attitudes toward love are represented in the poems?
3. Which of the poets seems the most cynical? The most idealistic? Quote lines to support your answers.
4. Point out examples of simile, metaphor, and personification.
5. What different rhyme schemes are represented in the poems?

Research

1. If you would like to read more poems by the Cavaliers, your school or public library probably has several collections of seventeenth-century poetry. Besides the poets you have just studied you might like to look up Thomas Carew. Bring some of your favorite discoveries to class.
2. The spirit of the Cavalier Poets lives on in the work of such modern poets as Sara Teasdale, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Dorothy Parker, and Phyllis McGinley. In each of the following volumes you will find a number of poems which will remind you of the Cavaliers: Teasdale, *Love Songs*; Millay, *A Few Figs from Thistles*; Parker, *Not So Deep as a Well*; McGinley, *The Love Letters of Phyllis McGinley*. Several of you might make a search for poems to share with the class.

JOHN MILTON 1608–1674



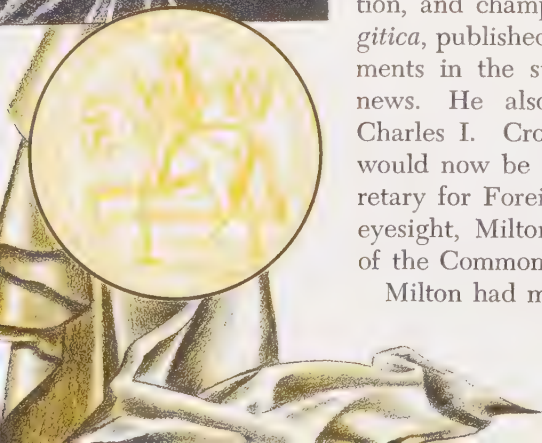
ONE of six children, John Milton was born in Cheapside, London. His father was a well-to-do scrivener (a profession involving such varied activities as drawing up marriage contracts and handling investments) and a talented amateur musician. He provided John with private tutors and later sent him to St. Paul's School and to Cambridge University. "My father destined me from a child to the pursuits of literature," Milton wrote later, "and from twelve years of age, I hardly ever left my studies, or went to bed before midnight."

At Cambridge, where Milton enrolled at seventeen, he wrote considerable poetry, both in English and in Latin. He received his B.A. degree in 1629 and stayed on to earn an M.A. in 1632. The next six years he spent at his parents' country home at Horton, near Windsor. He had considered becoming a clergyman, but he gave up this plan for a career as a poet.

Following the death of his mother in 1638, Milton made a European tour of almost two years' duration, spending most of his time in Italy. He returned to England when letters from home warned him that civil war was threatening. "I thought it base to be traveling for amusement abroad while my fellow citizens were fighting for liberty at home," he explained.

Upon his return Milton began writing prose pamphlets in the Puritan cause. He called for reform of the church, advocated divorce, urged improvements in public education, and championed freedom of the press. His *Areopagitica*, published in 1644, is one of the great historical documents in the still-continuing battle against censorship of news. He also defended vigorously the execution of Charles I. Cromwell recognized Milton's talent for what would now be called propaganda and appointed him Secretary for Foreign Tongues. In spite of increasingly poor eyesight, Milton continued as the chief literary defender of the Commonwealth.

Milton had married Mary Powell in 1643, when she was



seventeen and he was thirty-five. They proved incompatible, and Mary soon returned to her parents. She rejoined her husband in 1645, and before her death in 1652 she gave Milton three daughters.

The year in which Mary died Milton became totally blind. Two years later he married Catherine Woodcock. This marriage proved happy but brief, Catherine dying in 1658. It was of her that Milton wrote his famous sonnet, "Methought I saw my late espoused Saint." In 1663 Milton was married for the third time, again apparently happily, to Elizabeth Minshull.

Surprisingly enough, Milton was not punished when the monarchy was restored in 1660. He lived in retirement the rest of his life, dictating to volunteer secretaries the great poems he had contemplated before entering public service. Except for his sonnets, Milton's poems thus fall into two groups, separated by the period of Puritan rule. At widely spaced intervals Milton wrote nineteen sonnets in English and five in Italian. They rank among the greatest sonnets ever written.

Among the more notable poems composed during the six years Milton spent at Horton are "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso." Contrasting sharply in mood, the poems actually present two aspects of Milton's personality: the happy social being and the no less happy solitary thinker.

It is known that Milton had considered an epic about Adam's fall as early as 1640, and he had probably begun work on it by 1658. He completed *Paradise Lost* in 1665 and published it two years later. It brought him immediate recognition as a poet of great power and earned him a place in English literature he has never lost. Written in blank verse and divided into twelve books, *Paradise Lost* is Milton's attempt to account for the presence of evil in the world. His exalted mood, imaginative sweep, and stately style suit perfectly his epic theme, "to justify the ways of God to man." It is Milton's glory that he was able to harmonize the religious fervor of the Puritans with the intellectual exuberance of the Elizabethans; that he could intermingle Christian theology and pagan mythology with no detriment to either.

Milton's last poems, *Paradise Regained*, the story of Jesus overcoming Satan, and *Samson Agonistes*, a tragic drama in blank verse, were published in 1671. When Milton died in 1674, he was buried beside his father in the church of St. Giles, Cripplegate, London.



On His Having Arrived at the Age of Twenty-Three



How soon hath time, the subtle thief of youth,
Stolen on his wing my three-and-twentieth year!
My hasting days fly on with full career,
But my late spring no bud or blossom show'th.
Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth
That I to manhood am arrived so near;
And inward ripeness doth much less appear,
That some more timely-happy spirits endu'th.
Yet, be it less or more, or soon or slow,
It shall be still in strictest measure even
To that same lot, however mean or high,
Toward which time leads me, and the will of Heaven.
All is, if I have grace to use it so,
As ever in my great Task-Master's eye.

Discussion

1. Why does Milton accuse time of being “the *subtle* thief of youth”?
2. How do you interpret line 4?
3. What is “inward ripeness”? How does one tell if one has achieved this state?
4. What resolution does Milton make in the last six lines? Judging from what you know of Milton's life, did he keep the resolution?
5. What is the rhyme scheme of this poem?

On His Blindness

When I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent¹ which is death to hide
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest he returning chide;
“Doth God exact day-labor, light denied?”
I fondly² ask. But Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, “God doth not need
Either man’s work or his own gifts. Who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state
Is kingly: thousands at his bidding speed,
And post o’er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait.”

¹*one talent.* The reference is to the parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14–30. The man who received only one talent hid it in the earth. Milton’s “talent” was his ability to write.

²*fondly.* Foolishly.

Discussion

1. What question does Milton ask himself in this poem? How does he answer it?
2. What does Milton call a “mild yoke”? What does this tell us about his character?
3. How does Milton intend us to interpret: “His state is kingly”?
4. Why do you think the last line is so often quoted?
5. Is this sonnet Petrarchan or Shakespearean? (If you need to refresh your memory, see page 356.)
6. What connection in thought do you find between this and the preceding sonnet?

Research

Milton, of course, did more than “stand and wait.” After his blindness he rendered valuable service to his government and wrote his great poem, *Paradise Lost*. A little library work will provide material for a report on Milton’s activities after he became blind.



L'Allegro

Hence, loathèd Melancholy,
Of Cerberus¹ and blackest Midnight born
In Stygian cave forlorn,
'Mongst horrid shapes and shrieks and sights unholy!
Find out some uncouth cell,
Where brooding darkness spreads his jealous wings,
And the night-raven sings;
There under ebon shades and low-browed rocks,
As ragged as thy locks,
In dark Cimmerian² desert ever dwell.



But come, thou Goddess fair and free,
In heaven yclept³ Euphrosyne,
And by men heart-easing Mirth;
Whom lovely Venus, at a birth,
With two sister Graces⁴ more,
To ivy-crownèd Bacchus bore . . .
Haste thee, nymph, and bring with thee
Jest, and youthful Jollity,
Quips and cranks⁵ and wanton wiles,
Nods and becks⁶ and wreathèd smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's⁷ cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides.
Come, and trip it as you go,
On the light fantastic toe;

¹Cerberus. A three-headed dog which guarded the entrance to Hades.

²Cimmerian. Homer describes Cimmeria as a land beyond the ocean, which the sun never reaches.

³yclept. Named.

⁴sister Graces. Aglaia and Thalia. The Graces were the goddesses of beauty and charm.

⁵cranks. Plays on words.

⁶Nods and becks. Greetings and beckonings. The American columnist Franklin P. Adams used this phrase as the title of one of his books.

⁷Hebe. The goddess of youth.

And in thy right hand lead with thee
 The mountain-nymph, sweet Liberty;
 And if I give thee honor due,
 Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
 To live with her, and live with thee,
 In unreprieved pleasures free.
 To hear the lark begin his flight,
 And singing, startle the dull night,
 From his watch-tower in the skies,
 Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
 Then to come in spite of sorrow,
 And at my window bid good-morrow,
 Through the sweet-briar or the vine,
 Or the twisted eglantine;
 While the cock, with lively din,
 Scatters the rear of darkness thin;
 And to the stack, or the barn-door,
 Stoutly struts his dames before.
 Oft listening how the hounds and horn
 Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,
 From the side of some hoar hill,
 Through the high wood echoing shrill;
 Sometime walking, not unseen,
 By hedge-row elms, on hillocks green,
 Right against the eastern gate
 Where the great sun begins his state,
 Robed in flames and amber light,
 The clouds in thousand liveries dight;
 While the plowman, near at hand,
 Whistles o'er the furrowed land,
 And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
 And the mower whets his scythe,
 And every shepherd tells his tale⁸
 Under the hawthorn in the dale.
 Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
 Whilst the landskip⁹ round it measures;

⁸tells his tale. Counts his sheep.

⁹landskip. Landscape.





Russet lawns and fallows¹⁰ gray,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray;
Mountains on whose barren breast
The laboring clouds do often rest;
Meadows trim, with daisies pied,
Shallow brooks and rivers wide;
Towers and battlements it sees
Bosomed high in tufted trees,
Where perhaps some beauty lies,
The cynosure of neighboring eyes.
Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes
From betwixt two aged oaks,
Where Corydon and Thyrsis¹¹ met
Are at their savory dinner set
Of herbs and other country messes,
Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses;
And then in haste her bower she leaves,
With Thestylis to bind the sheaves;
Or, if the earlier season lead,
To the tanned haycock in the mead.
Sometimes, with secure delight,
The upland hamlets will invite,
When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecks¹² sound
To many a youth and many a maid
Dancing in the checkered shade;
And young and old come forth to play
On a sunshine holiday,
Till the livelong daylight fail.
Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
With stories told of many a feat,
How Faery Mab¹³ the junkets eat.

¹⁰*fallows*. Land plowed and left unseeded.

¹¹*Corydon and Thyrsis*. These and the next two names are taken from popular pastoral poems of Milton's day.

¹²*rebecks*. Three-stringed forerunners of the violin.

¹³*Faery Mab*. In Welsh folklore Mab was queen of the fairies.

She¹⁴ was pinched and pulled, she said;
 And he, by Friar's lantern¹⁵ led,
 Tells how the drudging goblin sweat
 To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
 When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
 His shadowy flail hath threshed the corn
 That ten day-laborers could not end;
 Then lies him down, the lubber fiend,
 And, stretched out all the chimney's length,
 Basks at the fire his hairy strength,
 And crop-full out of doors he flings,
 Ere the first cock his matin rings.
 Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
 By whispering winds soon lulled asleep.
 Towered cities please us then,
 And the busy hum of men,
 Where throngs of knights and barons bold,
 In weeds¹⁶ of peace high triumphs hold,
 With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
 Rain influence, and judge the prize
 Of wit or arms, while both contend
 To win her grace whom all commend.
 There let Hymen¹⁷ oft appear
 In saffron robe, with taper clear,
 And pomp and feast and revelry,
 With mask and antique pageantry;
 Such sights as youthful poets dream
 On summer eves by haunted stream.
 Then to the well-trod stage anon,
 If Jonson's learned sock¹⁸ be on,

¹⁴*She*. This pronoun and *he* in the next line both refer to storytellers.

¹⁵*Friar's lantern*. Will-o'-the-wisp.

¹⁶*weeds*. Garments.

¹⁷*Hymen*. The ancient Greek god of marriage, represented as carrying a torch and a veil. A clear-burning taper would be a good omen.

¹⁸*sock*. The sock was a low shoe worn by actors in a comedy.





Or sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild.
And ever, against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian¹⁹ airs,
Married to immortal verse,
Such as the meeting soul may pierce,
In notes with many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out,
With wanton heed and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running,
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony;
That Orpheus' self²⁰ may heave his head
From golden slumber on a bed
Of heaped Elysian flowers, and hear
Such strains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto to have quite set free
His half-regained Eurydice.
These delights if thou canst give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

¹⁹*Lydian*. In ancient Greek music a minor scale appropriate to soft pathos.

²⁰*Orpheus' self*. In Greek mythology Orpheus was so great a musician that he could charm all things. When his wife Eurydice died, Orpheus charmed Pluto into letting her go, but on the condition that Orpheus not look back. He did look back, and so lost his "half-regained" wife.



Discussion

1. What purpose do the first ten lines of the poem serve?
2. Whom would the poet choose as his companions for a happy day?
3. Describe briefly the experiences the poet claims would constitute a perfect day.
4. Is the picture of farm life romantic or realistic? Quote lines to support your answer.
5. What city pleasures does the poet recall? Which of Jonson's and Shakespeare's plays might fit his description?
6. Summarize in a sentence or two the poet's attitude toward life.
7. What does his extensive use of mythology tell us about Milton? About the readers for whom he was writing?
8. What makes the reading of a poem like this rewarding in spite of the difficulties it presents?

Research

1. Some of you will want to read "Il Penseroso," the companion poem to "L'Allegro." A comparison of the two poems will make an interesting oral report. Follow the poems step by step, beginning with the companions the poet would choose for each occasion.
2. Everyone has his own "L'Allegro"—his own perfect day. Write a description of yours, in either verse or prose.

Paradise Lost

From Book I

Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
Sing, heavenly Muse, that on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai,¹ did'st inspire
That shepherd,² who first taught the chosen seed,
In the beginning how the heavens and earth
Rose out of chaos: or, if Sion hill
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flowed
Fast by the oracle of God,³ I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above the Aonian mount,⁴ while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rime.

And chiefly thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples the upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for thou know'st; thou from the first
Wast present, and, with mighty wings out-spread,
Dove-like, sat'st brooding on the vast abyss,
And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark,
Illumine; what is low, raise and support;
That to the height of this great argument
I may assert eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men.

Say first—for heaven hides nothing from thy view;
Nor the deep tract of hell—say first, what cause
Moved our grand Parents, in that happy state,
Favored of Heaven so highly, to fall off
From their Creator, and transgress his will

¹*Oreb . . . Sinai.* It was on Mt. Horeb that God spoke to Moses from the burning bush, and it was on Mt. Sinai that Moses received the Ten Commandments.

²*That shepherd.* Moses.

³*the oracle of God.* The Temple in Jerusalem.

⁴*Aonian mount.* Mt. Helicon, in Greek mythology, is the home of the Muses.



For one restraint, lords of the world besides.
Who first seduced them to that foul revolt?

The infernal Serpent; he it was, whose guile,
Stirred up with envy and revenge, deceived

The mother of mankind; what time his pride
 Had cast him out from heaven, with all his host
 Of rebel angels; by whose aid, aspiring
 To set himself in glory above his peers
 He trusted to have equaled the Most High,
 If he opposed; and, with ambitious aim
 Against the throne and monarchy of God,
 Raised impious war in heaven, and battle proud,
 With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power
 Hurl'd headlong flaming from the ethereal sky,
 With hideous ruin and combustion, down
 To bottomless perdition; there to dwell
 In adamant chains and penal fire,
 Who durst defy the Omnipotent to arms.

Nine times the space that measures day and night
 To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
 Lay vanquished, rolling in the fiery gulf,
 Confounded, though immortal. But his doom
 Reserved him to more wrath; for now the thought
 Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
 Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes,
 That witnessed huge affliction and dismay,
 Mixed with obdurate pride, and steadfast hate.
 At once, as far as angels' ken, he views
 The dismal situation waste and wild.
 A dungeon horrible, on all sides round,
 As one great furnace flamed; yet from those flames
 No light; but rather darkness visible
 Served only to discover sights of woe,
 Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
 And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
 That comes to all; but torture without end
 Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
 With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed.
 Such place Eternal Justice had prepared
 For those rebellious; here their prison ordained
 In utter darkness, and their portion set,
 As far removed from God and light of Heaven

As from the center thrice to the utmost pole.
 Oh, how unlike the place from whence they fell!
 There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelmed
 With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
 He soon discerns; and, weltering by his side,
 One next himself in power, and next in crime,
 Long after known in Palestine, and named
 Beelzebub. To whom the Archenemy,
 And thence in Heaven called Satan, with bold words
 Breaking the horrid silence, thus began:—
 "If thou beest he—but, Oh, how fallen! how changed
 From him!—who, in the happy realms of light,
 Clothed with transcendent brightness, didst outshine
 Myriads, though bright—if he whom mutual league,
 United thoughts and counsels, equal hope
 And hazard in the glorious enterprise,
 Joined with me once, now misery hath joined
 In equal ruin; into what pit thou seest
 From what height fallen; so much the stronger proved
 He with his thunder; and till then who knew
 The force of those dire arms? Yet not for those,
 Nor what the potent Victor in his rage
 Can else inflict, do I repent, or change,
 Though changed in outward luster, that fixed mind,
 And high disdain from sense of injured merit,
 That with the Mightiest raised me to contend,
 And to the fierce contention brought along
 Innumerable force of Spirits armed,
 That durst dislike his reign, and, me preferring,
 His utmost power with adverse power opposed
 In dubious battle on the plains of Heaven,
 And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?
 All is not lost—the unconquerable will,
 And study of revenge, immortal hate,
 And courage never to submit or yield,
 And what is else not to be overcome;
 That glory never shall his wrath or might
 Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace

With suppliant knee, and deify his power
 Who from the terror of this arm so late
 Doubted his empire—that were low indeed,
 That were an ignominy, and shame beneath
 This downfall; since, by fate, the strength of gods,
 And this empyreal substance, cannot fail;
 Since, through experience of this great event,
 In arms not worse, in foresight much advanced,
 We may with more successful hope resolve
 To wage by force or guile eternal war,
 Irreconcilable to our grand Foe,
 Who now triumphs, and, in the excess of joy
 Sole reigning, holds the tyranny of heaven.”

So spake the apostate angel, though in pain,
 Vaunting aloud, but racked with deep despair
 And him thus answered soon his bold compeer:

“O prince, O chief of many-thronèd powers,
 That led the embattled seraphim to war
 Under thy conduct, and in dreadful deeds
 Fearless, endangered heaven’s perpetual King,
 And put to proof his high supremacy,
 Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate;
 Too well I see, and rue the dire event,
 That with sad overthrow, and foul defeat,
 Hath lost us heaven, and all this mighty host
 In horrible destruction laid thus low,
 As far as gods and heavenly essences
 Can perish: for the mind and spirit remain
 Invincible, and vigor soon returns,
 Though all our glory extinct, and happy state
 Here swallowed up in endless misery.
 But what if He our Conqueror (whom I now
 Of force believe Almighty, since no less
 Than such could have o’erpowered such force as ours)
 Have left us this our spirit and strength entire,
 Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
 That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,
 Or do him mightier service as his thralls

By right of war, whate'er his business be,
 Here in the heart of hell to work in fire,
 Or do his errands in the gloomy deep?
 What can it then avail, though yet we feel
 Strength undiminished, or eternal being
 To undergo eternal punishment?"

Whereto with speedy words the arch-fiend replied:
 "Fallen cherub, to be weak is miserable,
 Doing or suffering; but of this be sure,
 To do aught good never will be our task,
 But ever to do ill our sole delight,
 As being the contrary to His high will
 Whom we resist. If then his providence
 Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
 Our labor must be to pervert that end,
 And out of good still to find means of evil,
 Which ofttimes may succeed, so as perhaps
 Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
 His inmost counsels from their destined aim.
 But see, the angry Victor hath recalled
 His ministers of vengeance and pursuit
 Back to the gates of Heaven: the sulphurous hail,
 Shot after us in storm, o'erblown hath laid
 The fiery surge that from the precipice
 Of Heaven received us falling; and the thunder,
 Winged with red lightning and impetuous rage,
 Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
 To bellow through the vast and boundless Deep.
 Let us not slip the occasion, whether scorn
 Or satiate fury yield it from our Foe.
 Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild,
 The seat of desolation, void of light,
 Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
 Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend
 From off the tossing of these fiery waves;
 There rest, if any rest can harbor there;
 And, reassembling our afflicted powers,
 Consult how we may henceforth most offend

Our enemy, our own loss how repair,
 How overcome this dire calamity,
 What reinforcement we may gain from hope,
 If not what resolution from despair."

Thus Satan, talking to his nearest mate,
 With head uplift above the wave, and eyes
 That sparkling blazed; his other parts besides
 Prone on the flood, extended long and large,
 Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge
 As whom the fables name of monstrous size,⁵
 Titanian, or Earth-born, that warred on Jove,
 Briareos or Typhon, whom the den
 By ancient Tarus held, or that sea-beast
 Leviathan,⁶ which God of all his works
 Created hugest that swim the ocean-stream.
 Him, haply slumbering on the Norway foam,
 The pilot of some small night-foundered skiff
 Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,
 With fixed anchor in his scaly rind,
 Moors by his side under the lee, while night
 Invests the sea, and wished morn delays.
 So stretched out huge in length the Arch-Fiend lay,
 Chained on the burning lake; nor ever thence
 Had risen, or heaved his head, but that the will
 And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
 Left him at large to his own dark designs,
 That with reiterated crimes he might
 Heap on himself damnation, while he sought
 Evil to others, and enraged might see
 How all his malice served but to bring forth
 Infinite goodness, grace, and mercy, shown
 On Man by him seduced, but on himself
 Treble confusion, wrath, and vengeance poured.

⁵*whom the fables name of monstrous size.* In Greek mythology the twelve Titans were the children of Uranus and Gaea (Heaven and Earth). They made war on Zeus (Jove) but were defeated and imprisoned in Hades. Briareos and Typhon were giants with fifty and a hundred heads respectively. Briareos was sent to Hades and Typhon was imprisoned under Mt. Etna.

⁶*Leviathan.* The name in the Bible applied to the whale.



Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
His mighty stature; on each hand the flames
Driven backward slope their pointing spires, and, rolled
In billows, leave i' the midst a horrid vale.

Then with expanded wings he steers his flight
 Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air,
 That felt unusual weight; till on dry land
 He lights—if it were land that ever burned
 With solid, as the lake with liquid fire,
 And such appeared in hue as when the force
 Of subterranean wind transports a hill
 Torn from Pelorus,⁷ or the shattered side
 Of thundering Etna, whose combustible
 And fueled entrails, thence conceiving fire,
 Sublimed with mineral fury, aid the winds,
 And leave a singèd bottom all involved
 With stench and smoke. Such resting found the sole
 Of unblest feet. Him followed his next mate;
 Both glorying to have scaped the Stygian flood
 As gods, and by their own recovered strength,
 Not by the sufferance of supernal power.

“Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,”
 Said then the lost Archangel, “this the seat
 That we must change for Heaven?—this mournful gloom
 For that celestial light? Be it so, since he
 Who now is sovereign can dispose and bid
 What shall be right: farthest from him is best,
 Whom reason hath equaled, force hath made supreme
 Above his equals. Farewell, happy fields,
 Where joy forever dwells! Hail, horrors! hail,
 Infernal World! and thou, profoundest Hell,
 Receive thy new possessor—one who brings
 A mind not to be changed by place or time.
 The mind is its own place, and in itself
 Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.
 What matter where, if I be still the same,
 And what I should be, all but less than he
 Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least
 We shall be free; the Almighty hath not built

⁷*Pelorus*. Cape Faro, the point of Sicily nearest to Italy. In Roman times it was called *Pelorum Promontorium*.

Here for his envy, will not drive us hence:
 Here we may reign secure; and, in my choice,
 To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell:
 Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven."

Discussion

1. Why does Milton invoke the aid of the Muses?
2. What help does he ask of the Divine Spirit?
3. Quote the two lines which best summarize Milton's purpose in writing *Paradise Lost*.
4. To what extent does Milton's version of the fall of man agree with the Biblical account? (See Genesis, Chapter 3.)
5. Why were Satan and his followers cast out of Heaven? Why, according to Milton, were they not destroyed?
6. How do Satan and Beelzebub differ in character?
7. What heroic characteristics does Milton attribute to Satan?
8. Why do you think Milton chose to emphasize Satan rather than God?
9. Point out passages which give the universe a quality of vastness.
10. What does Satan mean in the following lines? What larger applications can you think of?

"The mind is its own place, and in itself
 Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven."

"Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven."

Research

1. Various students might volunteer to read additional portions of *Paradise Lost* and summarize them for the class. In each case the student should select one or several passages to read aloud.
2. If you are studying Latin, or have studied it, you will find it interesting to note how many words of Latin origin Milton uses. Select a dozen or more words and prepare to explain their Latin derivation to your classmates. The following Latin words will provide some clues: *fnio*, *infernus*, *omnis*, *per*, *porto*, *potior*, *sto*, *sub*, *trans*.

JOHN DRYDEN 1631–1700

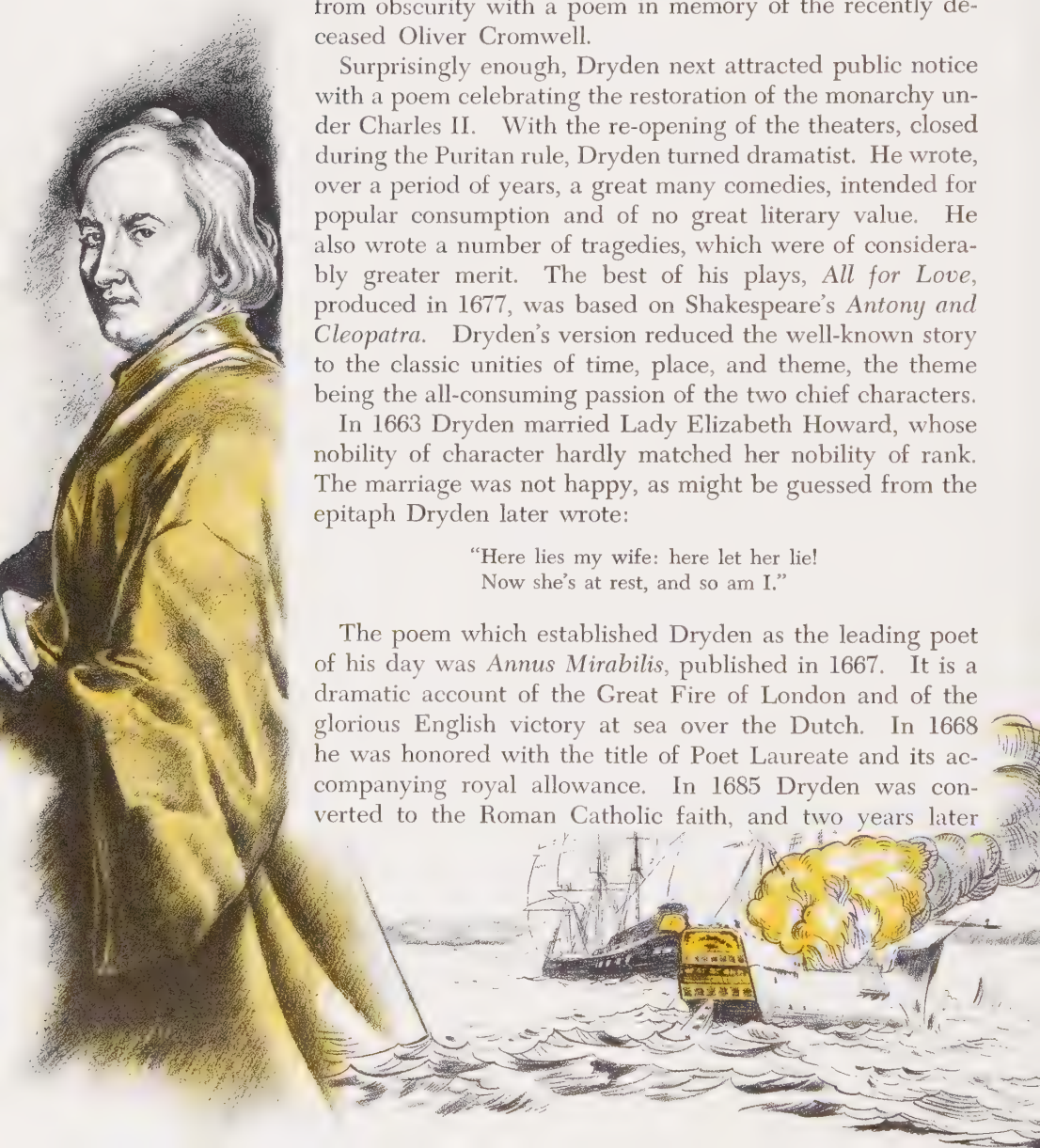
JOHN DRYDEN was born in Northamptonshire, where his father owned a modest estate. John attended Westminster School in London and later Cambridge University. Upon leaving college he went to London and found employment as a clerk. Two years later he emerged from obscurity with a poem in memory of the recently deceased Oliver Cromwell.

Surprisingly enough, Dryden next attracted public notice with a poem celebrating the restoration of the monarchy under Charles II. With the re-opening of the theaters, closed during the Puritan rule, Dryden turned dramatist. He wrote, over a period of years, a great many comedies, intended for popular consumption and of no great literary value. He also wrote a number of tragedies, which were of considerably greater merit. The best of his plays, *All for Love*, produced in 1677, was based on Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*. Dryden's version reduced the well-known story to the classic unities of time, place, and theme, the theme being the all-consuming passion of the two chief characters.

In 1663 Dryden married Lady Elizabeth Howard, whose nobility of character hardly matched her nobility of rank. The marriage was not happy, as might be guessed from the epitaph Dryden later wrote:

"Here lies my wife: here let her lie!
Now she's at rest, and so am I."

The poem which established Dryden as the leading poet of his day was *Annus Mirabilis*, published in 1667. It is a dramatic account of the Great Fire of London and of the glorious English victory at sea over the Dutch. In 1668 he was honored with the title of Poet Laureate and its accompanying royal allowance. In 1685 Dryden was converted to the Roman Catholic faith, and two years later



he published *The Hind and the Panther*, a religious allegory in defense of the Catholic Church. This poem established Dryden in royal favor as James II was a Catholic.

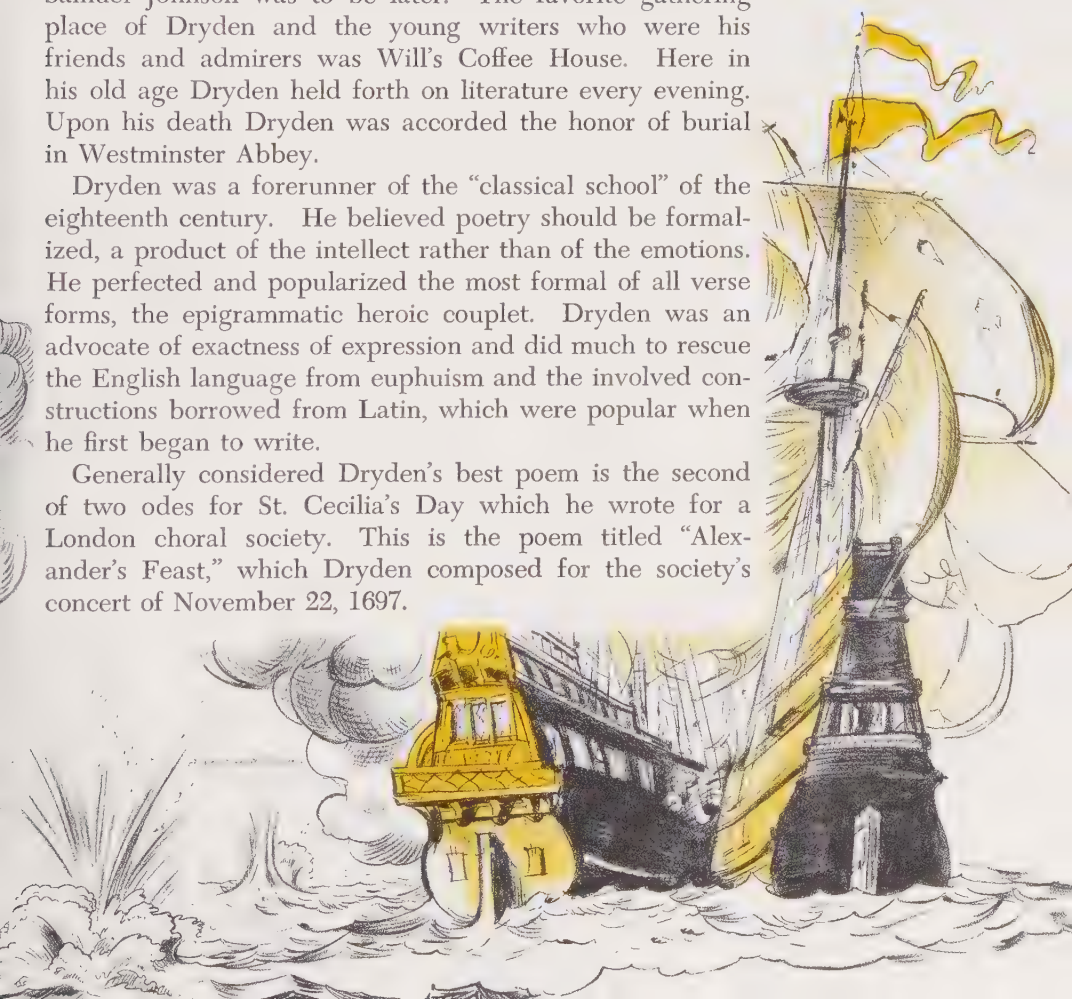
When in 1688 a subscription edition of Milton's *Paradise Lost* was proposed, Dryden not only subscribed but contributed the verse that went under Milton's portrait on the frontispiece.

The Revolution of 1688 brought the Protestant William III to the throne, and Dryden lost his title and allowance as laureate. To support his family, which now included three sons, he again turned to writing plays.

In the latter part of his life Dryden became a sort of literary dictator, as Ben Jonson had been before and as Samuel Johnson was to be later. The favorite gathering place of Dryden and the young writers who were his friends and admirers was Will's Coffee House. Here in his old age Dryden held forth on literature every evening. Upon his death Dryden was accorded the honor of burial in Westminster Abbey.

Dryden was a forerunner of the "classical school" of the eighteenth century. He believed poetry should be formalized, a product of the intellect rather than of the emotions. He perfected and popularized the most formal of all verse forms, the epigrammatic heroic couplet. Dryden was an advocate of exactness of expression and did much to rescue the English language from euphuism and the involved constructions borrowed from Latin, which were popular when he first began to write.

Generally considered Dryden's best poem is the second of two odes for St. Cecilia's Day which he wrote for a London choral society. This is the poem titled "Alexander's Feast," which Dryden composed for the society's concert of November 22, 1697.



Alexander's Feast; or, The Power of Music

A Song in Honor of St. Cecilia's Day: 1697

- 1 'Twas at the royal feast for Persia won
By Philip's warlike son¹—
Aloft in awful state
The godlike hero sate
On his imperial throne;
His valiant peers were placed around,
Their brows with roses and with myrtles bound
(So should desert in arms be crowned);
The lovely Thaïs by his side
Sat like a blooming Eastern bride,
In flower of youth and beauty's pride.
Happy, happy, happy pair!
None but the brave,
None but the brave,
None but the brave deserves the fair.

CHORUS

*Happy, happy, happy pair!
None but the brave,
None but the brave,
None but the brave deserves the fair.*

¹*Philip's warlike son.* Alexander the Great, who though vastly outnumbered, defeated the Persians in the battle of Arbela in 331 B.C.





- 2 Timotheus² placed on high
 Amid the tuneful choir,
 With flying fingers touched the lyre;
 The trembling notes ascend the sky,
 And heavenly joys inspire.
 The song began from Jove,
 Who left his blissful seats above,
 (Such is the power of mighty love).
 A dragon's fiery form belied the god;
 Sublime on radiant spires he rode
 When he to fair Olympia³ pressed;
 And while he sought her snowy breast,
 Then round her slender waist he curled,
 And stamped an image of himself, a sovereign of the world.
 The listening crowd admire the lofty sound;



²*Timotheus*. A famous Greek musician.

³*Olympia*. Alexander's mother.

A present deity! they shout around;
 A present deity! the vaulted roofs rebound.
 With ravished ears
 The monarch hears,
 Assumes the god,
 Affects to nod,
 And seems to shake the spheres.

CHORUS

*With ravished ears
 The monarch hears,
 Assumes the god,
 Affects to nod,
 And seems to shake the spheres.*



The praise of Bacchus then the sweet musician sung,
 Of Bacchus ever fair and ever young.
 The jolly god in triumph comes;
 Sound the trumpets, beat the drums;
 Flushed with a purple grace
 He shows his honest face.
 Now give the hautboys⁴ breath; he comes, he comes.
 Bacchus, ever fair and young,
 Drinking joys did first ordain;
 Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
 Drinking is the soldier's pleasure;
 Rich the treasure,
 Sweet the pleasure,
 Sweet is pleasure after pain.

CHORUS

*Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
 Drinking is the soldier's pleasure;
 Rich the treasure,
 Sweet the pleasure,
 Sweet is pleasure after pain.*



⁴hautboys. Oboes.



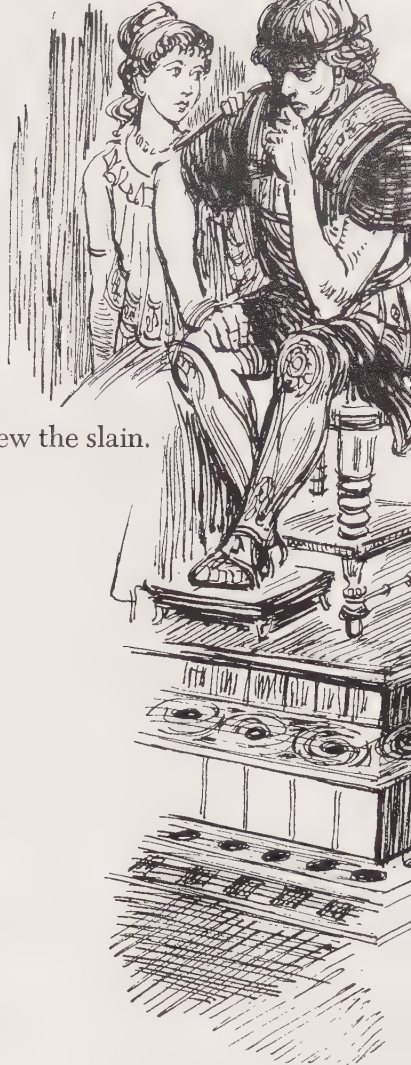
4 Soothed with the sound the king grew vain;
Fought all his battles o'er again;
And thrice he routed all his foes, and thrice he slew the slain.

The master saw the madness rise,
His glowing cheeks, his ardent eyes;
And while he heaven and earth defied,
Changed his hand, and checked his pride.

He chose a mournful Muse
Soft pity to infuse;
He sung Darius⁵ great and good,
By too severe a fate
Fallen, fallen, fallen, fallen,
Fallen from his high estate,
And weltering in his blood;
Deserted at his utmost need
By those his former bounty fed;
On the bare earth exposed he lies,
With not a friend to close his eyes.

With downcast looks the joyless victor sate,
Revolving in his altered soul
The various turns of chance below;
And now and then a sigh he stole,
And tears began to flow.

CHORUS *Revolving in his altered soul
The various turns of chance below;
And now and then a sigh he stole,
And tears began to flow.*



⁵*Darius*. The king of the Persians whom Alexander had just defeated. After the battle Darius was murdered by one of his own men.



5

The mighty master smiled to see
That love was in the next degree;
'Twas but a kindred-sound to move,
For pity melts the mind to love.

Softly sweet, in Lydian⁶ measures,
Soon he soothed his soul to pleasures,
War, he sung, is toil and trouble,
Honor but an empty bubble;

Never ending, still beginning,
Fighting still, and still destroying;
If the world be worth thy winning,
Think, oh, think it worth enjoying.

Lovely Thaïs sits beside thee,
Take the good the gods provide thee.

The many rend the skies with loud applause;
So Love was crowned, but Music won the cause.

The prince, unable to conceal his pain,
Gazed on the fair
Who caused his care,
And sighed and looked, sighed and looked,
Sighed and looked, and sighed again;
At length, with love and wine at once oppressed,
The vanquished victor sunk upon her breast.

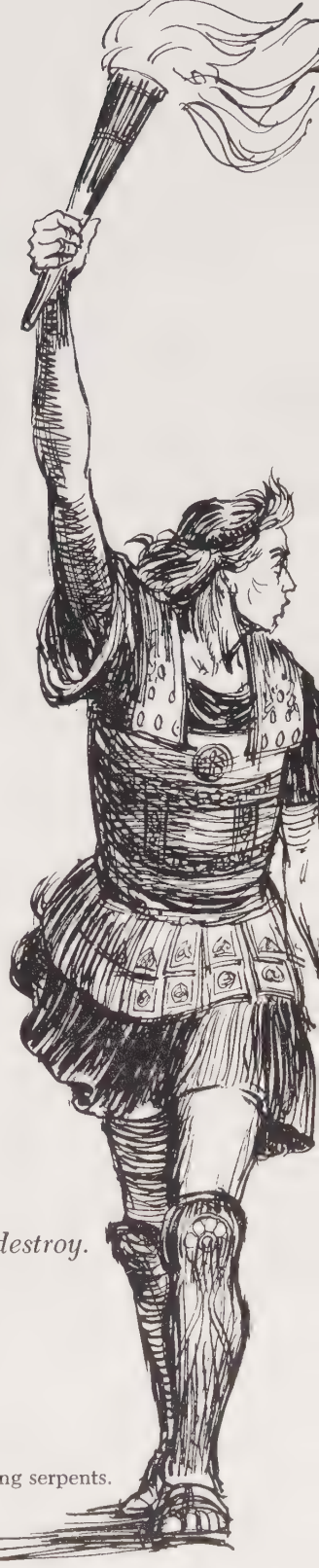
CHORUS

*The prince, unable to conceal his pain,
Gazed on the fair
Who caused his care,
And sighed and looked, sighed and looked,
Sighed and looked, and sighed again;
At length, with love and wine at once oppressed,
The vanquished victor sunk upon her breast.*

⁶*Lydian*. The Lydians were a people of Asia Minor, whose music was noted for its soft and effeminate character.

6 Now strike the golden lyre again,
A louder yet, and yet a louder strain.
Break his bands of sleep asunder,
And rouse him, like a rattling peal of thunder.
Hark, hark, the horrid sound
Has raised up his head;
As awaked from the dead,
And amazed, he stares around.
Revenge, revenge, Timotheus cries,
See the Furies[†] arise;
See the snakes that they rear,
How they hiss in their hair,
And the sparkles that flash from their eyes!
Behold a ghastly band,
Each a torch in his hand!
Those are Grecian ghosts, that in battle were slain,
And unburied remain
Inglorious on the plain.
Give the vengeance due
To the valiant crew.
Behold how they toss their torches on high,
How they point to the Persian abodes
And glittering temples of their hostile gods.
The princes applaud with a furious joy;
And the king seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy.
Thais led the way
To light him to his prey,
And, like another Helen, fired another Troy.

CHORUS *And the king seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy.
Thais led the way
To light him to his prey,
And, like another Helen, fired another Troy.*



[†]Furies. In Greek mythology, avenging spirits whose hair was writhing serpents.



7 Thus, long ago,
 Ere heaving bellows learned to blow,
 While organs yet were mute,
 Timotheus, to his breathing flute
 And sounding lyre,
 Could swell the soul to rage, or kindle soft desire.
 At last divine Cecilia^s came,
 Inventress of the vocal frame;
The sweet enthusiast from her sacred store
 Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
 And added length to solemn sounds,
With Nature's mother-wit, and arts unknown before.
 Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
 Or both divide the crown;
 He raised a mortal to the skies;
 She drew an angel down.

^s*divine Cecilia.* St. Cecilia was a Roman martyr of the third century. According to legend she invented the organ and played upon it so beautifully that an angel came down from heaven to hear her.

GRAND CHORUS

*At last divine Cecilia came,
 Inventress of the vocal frame;
 The sweet enthusiast from her sacred store
 Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
 And added length to solemn sounds,
 With Nature's mother-wit, and arts unknown before.
 Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
 Or both divide the crown;
 He raised a mortal to the skies;
 She drew an angel down.*

Discussion

1. What is the setting of the poem? How does it contribute to the effectiveness of the poem?
2. Why does the crowd shout "A present deity!" in Stanza 2?
3. What is the meaning of the line, "And thrice he routed all his foes, and thrice he slew the slain"?
4. What is implied by Alexander's "altered soul" in Stanza 4?
5. Why is Alexander called the "vanquished victor" in Stanza 5?
6. Summarize briefly the different moods Timotheus created with his music. What, in each case, was Alexander's reaction?
7. What is the significance of the comparison between Thaïs and Helen? Look up the story of Helen if you do not know it.
8. Point out the lines which justify each of the three parts of the title.
9. There are several often-quoted lines in the poem. If you don't recognize them, which lines do you think are worth memorizing?

Research

1. Alexander the Great is in many ways one of the enigmas of history. A report on his life would provide background for the poem.
2. It would be worthwhile to illustrate the mood-creating powers of music by playing a number of good recordings, perhaps attempting to illustrate the moods in the poem.
3. Some musically trained student might assume responsibility for explaining the lines in which Dryden describes the organ.



Lines Printed under the Engraved Portrait of Milton

Three poets,¹ in three distant ages born,
Greece, Italy, and England did adorn.
The first in loftiness of thought surpassed,
The next in majesty, in both the last;
The force of nature could no farther go;
To make a third she joined the former two.

¹Three poets. Homer, Vergil, and Milton.

Discussion

1. What makes this poem a great compliment to Milton?
2. In the poems of Milton included in this book point out examples of “loftiness of thought” and “majesty.”

Research

Brief reports on the works of Homer and Vergil will help to emphasize Dryden’s tribute. Do other critics attribute loftiness of thought to Homer and majesty to Vergil?

ALEXANDER POPE was born into a Catholic family in London at a time when there was a much anti-Catholic feeling. The year Pope was born the Protestant William III replaced the Catholic James II on the throne. Pope's father was a prosperous linen merchant, who retired while Alexander was a boy and moved his family to Binfield, near Windsor Forest. He saw to it that his son was educated at home since his religion prevented him from attending either Oxford or Cambridge.

All his life Pope was obsessed with the idea that all men were against him—an unfortunate but perhaps not unnatural result of religious discrimination against him. His poor health contributed to his unhappiness. He was later to describe his life as “one long disease.”

Pope began to write poetry while still in his teens, and his *Essay on Criticism*, published when he was only twenty-three, immediately placed him among the leading poets of his day. *The Rape of the Lock*, a satire on social foibles written in mock-heroic verse, published the following year, raised his reputation to the very top.

Pope's best-remembered poem, *An Essay on Man*, appeared in 1732-34. In it Pope applied common sense to the problems of man's relation to the universe. The first epistle treats of man's place in nature; the second deals with ethics; the third with the origins of society; and the fourth with the search for happiness. The poem as a whole reflects the age's satisfaction with things as they are.

Pope was the first English poet to make an adequate living from writing alone. His success proved that writers need not be dependent upon patrons and gave dignity to the profession of writing.

Pope's reputation rests on his technical skills rather than on profound thought or deep feeling. He took over the heroic couplet from Dryden and made of it the “closed” couplet, which forms a grammatical unit, with the thought generally completed in the second line.

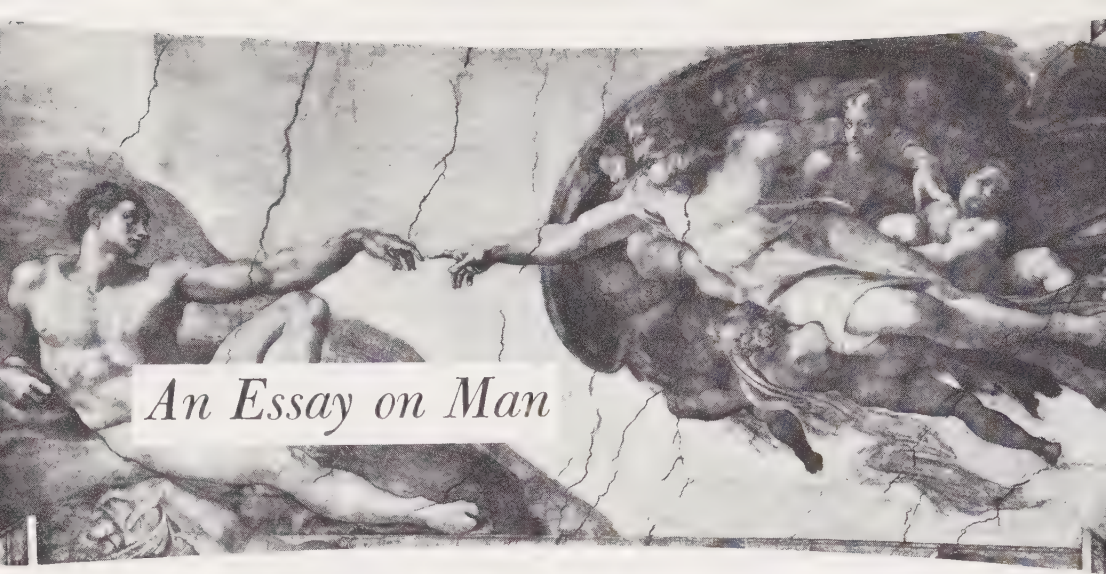
Pope was also a master of adapting rhythm and language to subject. In his *Essay on Criticism* he both explains and illustrates how sound can be made to “seem an echo to the sense.” Note that the first couplet cannot be read rapidly, nor the second slowly.

When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,
The line too labours, and the words move slow:
Not so when swift Camilla scours the plain,
Flies o'er th' unbending corn, and skims along the main.

ALEXANDER POPE

1688-1744





An Essay on Man

Epistle II

- I Know then thyself, presume not God to scan:
The proper study of mankind is man.
Placed on this isthmus of a middle state,
A being darkly wise and rudely great;
With too much knowledge for the sceptic side,
With too much weakness for the stoic's pride,
He hangs between; in doubt to act, or rest;
In doubt to deem himself a god or beast;
In doubt his mind or body to prefer;
Born but to die, and reasoning but to err;
Alike in ignorance, his reason such,
Whether he thinks too little or too much:
Chaos of thought and passion, all confused;
Still by himself abused, or disabused;
Created half to rise, and half to fall;
Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all;
Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurled;
The glory, jest, and riddle of the world!
- II Two principles in human nature reign;
Self-love to urge, and reason to restrain;

Nor this a good, nor that a bad we call,
 Each works its end to move or govern all;
 And to their proper operation still
 Ascribe all good; to their improper, ill.

Self-love, the spring of motion, acts¹ the soul;
 Reason's comparing balance rules the whole.
 Man, but for that, no action could attend,
 And, but for this, were active to no end;
 Fixed like a plant on his peculiar spot,
 To draw nutrition, propagate, and rot;
 Or, meteor-like, flame lawless through the void,
 Destroying others, by himself destroyed.

- v Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
 As to be hated needs but to be seen;
 Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
 We first endure, then pity, then embrace.
 But where th' extreme of vice, was ne'er agreed.
 Ask "where's the north?" at York 'tis on the Tweed;
 In Scotland, at the Orcades; and there,
 At Greenland, Zembla, or the Lord knows where.
 No creature owns it in the first degree,
 But thinks his neighbor further gone than he;
 Even those who dwell beneath its very zone,
 Or never feel the rage, or never own;
 What happier natures shrink at with affright
 The hard inhabitant contends is right.

¹*acts*. Activates.

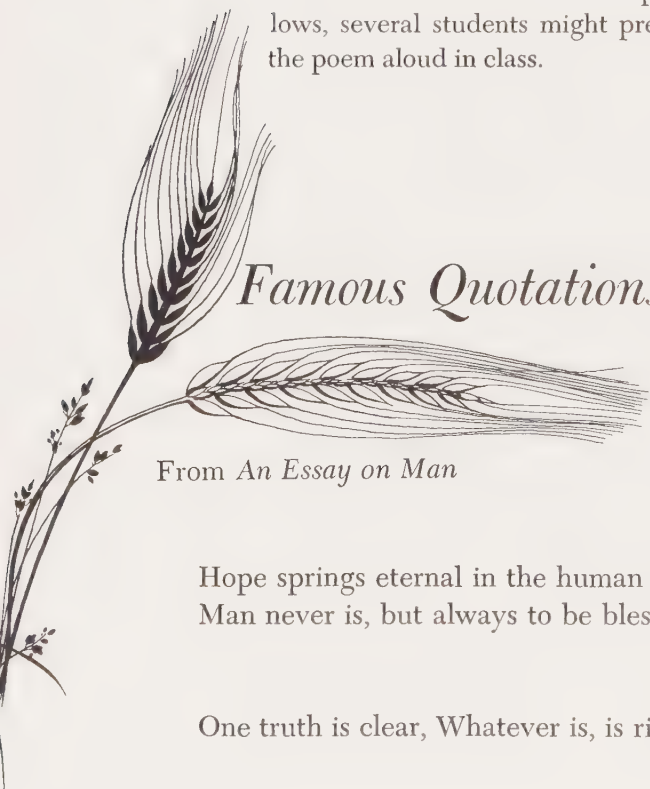
Discussion

1. What do the first two lines mean?
2. How do you interpret the statement that man is "lord of all things, yet prey to all"?

3. Explain in what sense man is the “glory, jest, and riddle of the world”?
4. What, according to Pope, are the two principles of human nature?
5. How does man excuse his vices?

Research

1. There are four Epistles in *An Essay on Man*. It would be worthwhile to have a member of the class report on each of the other three.
2. One of Pope's most famous poems is his mock-heroic *The Rape of the Lock*. It is a witty satire based on the actual incident of a young lord snipping a curl of a young lady's hair. Her family objected and the incident assumed the proportions of a feud. If time allows, several students might prepare to read at least a portion of the poem aloud in class.



Famous Quotations from Pope

From *An Essay on Man*

Hope springs eternal in the human breast;
Man never is, but always to be blessed.

Epistle I, ll. 95-96.

One truth is clear, Whatever is, is right.

Ibid., l. 294.

An honest man's the noblest work of God.

Epistle IV, l. 248.

From *Moral Essays*

'Tis education forms the common mind:
Just as the twig is bent the tree's inclined.

Epistle I, ll. 149-150.

From *An Essay on Criticism*

A little learning is a dang'rous thing;
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring:
There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
And drinking largely sobers us again.

ll. 215-218.

True wit is natured to advantage dressed,
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed.

ll. 297-298.

Be not the first by whom the new are tried,
Nor yet the last to lay the old aside.

ll 335-336.

True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
As those move easiest who have learned to dance.

ll. 362-363.

To err is human, to forgive, divine.

l. 525.

Men must be taught as if you taught them not,
And things unknown proposed as things forgot.

ll. 574-575.

For fools rush in where angels fear to tread.

l. 625.

THOMAS GRAY was born in London, where his father was a moderately well-off money-broker. The elder Gray was bad-tempered and selfish, and it was to his mother that Thomas turned for encouragement. Mrs. Gray, in partnership with her sister, ran a successful millinery shop, which made it possible for Thomas to go to Eton and in 1734 to Cambridge University. At Cambridge Gray established what was to be a lifelong friendship with Horace Walpole, son of the then Prime Minister.

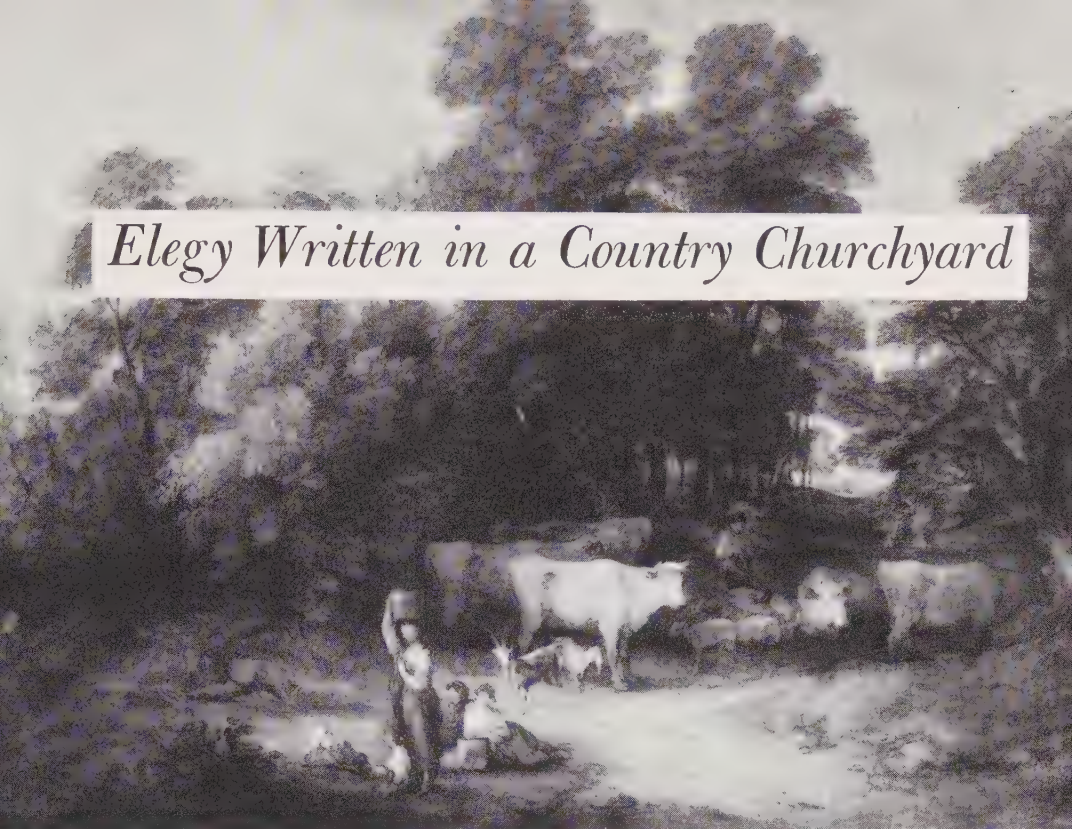
In 1739 Gray and Walpole left on a two-year tour of Europe. Gray was his friend's guest, though he may have had some help from his father. Gray returned to London in 1741. Not long afterwards his father died, leaving the widow and son in comfortable financial circumstances. Gray soon settled in Cambridge, and his mother and aunt retired to live with another sister at Stoke Poges, in Buckinghamshire. Gray visited his mother there each summer until her death in 1753, and it was upon these visits he liked to wander in the churchyard, deciphering the old tombstones and speculating upon the lives of those buried there.

Gray wrote little poetry, but that little was highly polished both in thought and form. Gray was in many ways a forerunner of the Romantic Movement. He loved nature, took a sympathetic interest in common people, and was much given to melancholy reflection. Among his major poems are "Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College," 1742; "The Progress of Poesy," 1754; and "The Bard," 1757. Gray shrank from publicity, and when he was offered the post of poet laureate in 1757 he declined. He died in 1771 and was buried in the churchyard at Stoke Poges.

Gray published his most famous work, "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard," in 1751. The year before he had sent it in manuscript form to his friend Walpole, noting that it was "a thing to which he had at last put an end." He had indeed been working on it between eight and nine years, polishing it to a high degree of artistic consistency. Already a recognized poet, the "Elegy" firmly established his fame. Because of the universality of its theme and the artistic perfection of its form, the "Elegy" has become one of the most quoted works in English literature and is perhaps the best known single poem in the English language. When about to engage in battle against the French in Canada in 1759 General Wolfe quoted the ninth stanza of the "Elegy" and said, "I would rather be the author of those lines than take Quebec."



THOMAS GRAY 1716-1771



Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

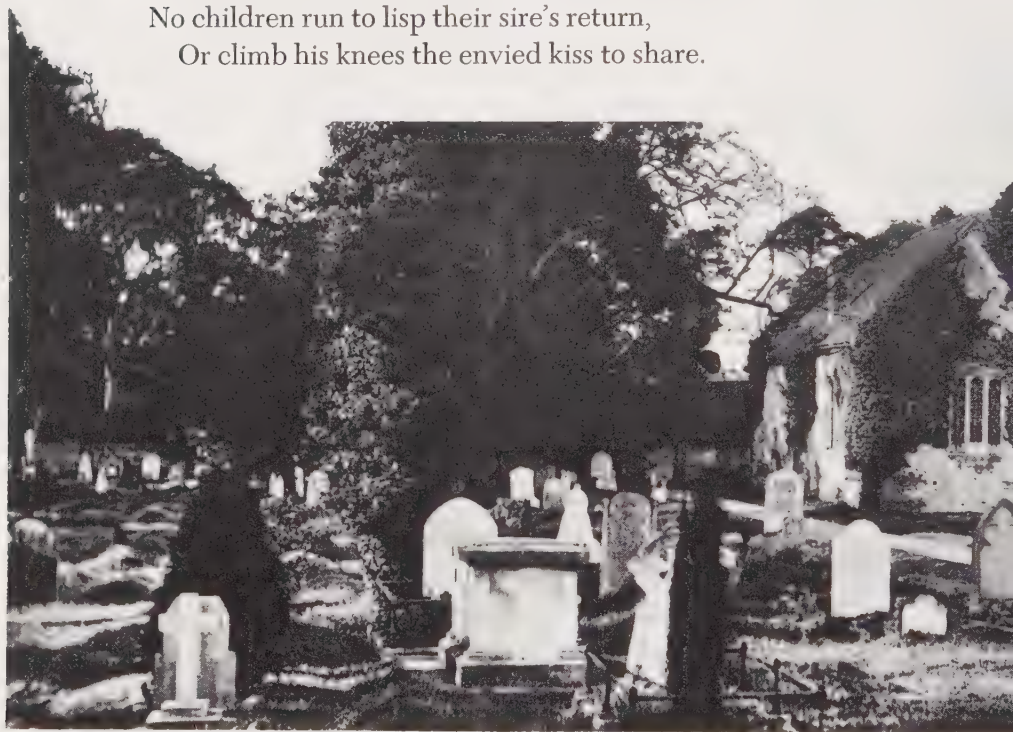
Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds;

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such, as wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mold'ring heap,
Each in his narrow cell forever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
 The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
 The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
 No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
 Or busy housewife ply her evening care;
 No children run to lisp their sire's return,
 Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.



Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield;
 Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe¹ has broke;
 How jocund did they drive their team afield!
 How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not ambition mock their useful toil,
 Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
 Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile,
 The short and simple annals of the poor.

¹glebe. Soil.



The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Awaits alike th' inevitable hour.
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault,
If memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can honor's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or flattery soothe the dull, cold ear of death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have swayed,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.

But knowledge to their eyes her ample page
Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll;
Chill penury repressed their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village Hampden,² that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood;
Some mute, inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.³

²*Hampden.* John Hampden's resistance to Charles I's "ship money" tax helped to bring on the civil war.

³*Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.* In his efforts to bring about needed reforms Cromwell was guilty of killing many innocent people.

The applause of listening senates to command,
 The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
 To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
 And read their history in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbade; nor circumscribed alone
 Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined;
 Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
 And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
 To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
 Or heap the shrine of luxury and pride
 With incense kindled at the muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's⁴ ignoble strife,
 Their sober wishes never learned to stray;
 Along the cool, sequestered vale of life
 They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Yet ev'n these bones from insult to protect,⁵
 Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
 With uncouth rimes and shapeless sculpture decked,
 Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unlettered muse,⁶
 The place of fame and elegy supply;
 And many a holy text around she strews,
 That teach the rustic moralist to die.

⁴*Far from the madding crowd.* Thomas Hardy chose this phrase as the title for one of his novels. *Madding* means wild or turbulent.

⁵*from insults to protect.* The tombstones kept people from walking on the graves.

⁶*spelt by th' unlettered muse.* Some of the epitaphs, composed by uneducated poets, contain misspelled words.





For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
Ev'n from the tomb the voice of nature cries,
Ev'n in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who mindful of th' unhonored dead
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;
If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
"Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

"There at the foot of yonder nodding beech
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

"Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove,
Now drooping, woeful wan, like one forlorn,
Or crazed with care, or crossed in hopeless love.

"One morn I missed him on the customary hill,
Along the heath and near his favorite tree;
Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he;

"The next with dirges due in sad array
Slow through the church-way path we saw him borne.
Approach and read (for thou can'st read) the lay,
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn."



THE EPITAPH

*Here rests his head upon the lap of earth,
 A youth to fortune and to fame unknown.
 Fair science frowned not on his humble birth,
 And melancholy marked him for her own.*

*Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,
 Heaven did a recompense as largely send.
 He gave to Misery, all he had, a tear,
 He gained from Heaven ('twas all he wished) a friend.*

*No farther seek his merits to disclose,
 Or draw his frailties from their dread abode
 (There they alike in trembling hope repose),
 The bosom of his Father and his God.*

Discussion

1. The "Elegy" is organized in units of thought, each leading logically to the next. Find these stanza groups and summarize each briefly.
2. In what ways have we improved the opportunities of the poor since Gray's time?
3. Point out passages which seem to be autobiographical.
4. What attitude toward life is presented in "The Epitaph"?
5. Many great men have named this poem as their favorite. What do you think they found in it?

Research

1. Select at least a dozen meaningful lines to memorize.
2. Like Gray, the American poet Edgar Lee Masters found inspiration in a cemetery. You are probably already acquainted with Masters' "Anne Rutledge." Look up some of his other poems in *Spoon River Anthology* and select for reading aloud one or two which agree in theme with Gray's "Elegy."

OLIVER GOLDSMITH was born near Ballymahon, Ireland, the fifth child of an idealistic but impoverished clergyman. Oliver was educated in various village schools. In 1752 Goldsmith went to Edinburgh to study medicine, an uncle paying the bill. After two years he quit to spend two years wandering on foot in Europe, occasionally attending lectures at various universities, and earning his meals by playing his flute or begging. Upon his return, he settled in London, where, among other things, he tried teaching, acting, proofreading, and practicing medicine, all without success. Then, with better success, he turned to writing, producing, besides newspaper articles and reviews, a number of textbooks, notable for their readable style and their almost complete indifference to facts.

Goldsmith's first literary recognition came from a series of letters for the *Public Ledger*, 1760-61, in which he pretended to be a visiting Chinaman sending home his comments on English life and customs. Goldsmith met Samuel Johnson in 1761, and they quickly became friends. At Johnson's wish Goldsmith was one of the original nine who formed the famous Club in 1763. When Goldsmith wrote a comedy, *The Good-Natured Man*, it was Johnson who wrote the prologue for it. The play was produced early in 1768 at the Covent Garden theater. Oddly enough, the comedy failed because it was too funny for audiences who still went to the theater to weep.

Goldsmith's literary fame rests upon his success in three different types: a novel, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, published in 1766; a poem, "The Deserted Village," published in 1770; and a comedy, *She Stoops to Conquer*, produced at Covent Garden in 1773. *She Stoops to Conquer* was dedicated to Johnson and its prologue was written by David Garrick. That play struck the death knell of sentimental comedy.

"The Deserted Village" is characterized by simplicity and sincerity. In its emphasis on democracy and the worth of the individual it foreshadows the American Declaration of Independence. The verse form is that of rhymed couplets, popularized by Alexander Pope, though there the resemblance ends. Goldsmith is sentimental and kindly, where Pope would have been satirical and hard.

Goldsmith died deeply in debt and was buried in a London cemetery in an unmarked grave. When his friends later memorialized him in Westminster Abbey, Johnson contributed the epitaph: "He touched nothing which he did not adorn."



**OLIVER
GOLDSMITH**

1728-1774



The Deserted Village

Sweet Auburn! loveliest village of the plain,
Where health and plenty cheered the laboring swain,
Where smiling spring its earliest visit paid,
And parting summer's lingering blooms delayed;
Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
Seats of my youth, when every sport could please,
How often have I loitered o'er thy green,
Where humble happiness endeared each scene!
How often have I paused on every charm,
The sheltered cot,¹ the cultivated farm,
The never-failing brook, the busy mill,
The decent² church that topped the neighboring hill,
The hawthorn bush with seats beneath the shade,
For talking age and whispering lovers made!

¹*cot.* Cottage.

²*decent.* Suitable or appropriate.



How often have I blessed the coming day,
When toil remitting lent its turn to play,
And all the village train, from labor free,
Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree;
While many a pastime circled in the shade,
The young contending as the old surveyed;
And many a gambol frolicked o'er the ground,
And sleights of art and feats of strength went round;
And still, as each repeated pleasure tired,
Succeeding sports the mirthful band inspired;
The dancing pair that simply sought renown,
By holding out, to tire each other down;
The swain mistrustless of his smutted face,³
While secret laughter tittered round the place;
The bashful virgin's sidelong looks of love;
The matron's glance that would those looks reprove.
These were thy charms, sweet village! Sports like these,
With sweet succession, taught e'en toil to please;
These round thy bowers their cheerful influence shed,
These were thy charms—but all these charms are fled.

³*mistrustless of his smutted face.* He was not aware he had been tricked by his companions into smearing his face with soot.



Sweet smiling village, loveliest of the lawn!
 Thy sports are fled, and all thy charms withdrawn.
 Amidst thy bowers the tyrant's⁴ hand is seen,
 And desolation saddens all thy green.
 One only master grasps the whole domain,
 And half a tillage stints thy smiling plain.
 No more thy glassy brook reflects the day,
 But choked with sedges works its weedy way;
 Along thy glades, a solitary guest,
 The hollow-sounding bittern guards its nest;
 Amidst thy desert-walks the lapwing flies,
 And tires their echoes with unvaried cries.
 Sunk are thy bowers in shapeless ruin all,
 And the long grass o'ertops the moldering wall;
 And trembling, shrinking from the spoiler's hand,
 Far, far away thy children leave the land.

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
 Where wealth accumulates, and men decay;
 Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade—
 A breath can make them,⁵ as a breath has made—
 But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
 When once destroyed, can never be supplied.

A time there was,⁶ ere England's griefs began,
 When every rood⁷ of ground maintained its man;
 For him light labor spread her wholesome store,
 Just gave what life required, but gave no more;
 His best companions, innocence and health;
 And his best riches, ignorance of wealth.

⁴*tyrant*. The absentee landlord. In the latter part of the eighteenth century many landowners were finding it more profitable to evict their tenants and combine many small tracts of land into large pastures for sheep grazing. Hence the less tilling of soil mentioned a few lines farther on.

⁵*A breath can make them*. It took only the king's word to raise a man to the nobility.

⁶*A time there was*. This is a case of "the good old days." There never was any such time.

⁷*rood*. A quarter acre.

But times are altered; trade's unfeeling train
 Usurp the land and dispossess the swain.
 Along the lawn, where scattered hamlets rose,
 Unwieldy wealth and cumbrous pomp repose,
 And every want to opulence allied,
 And every pang that folly pays to pride.
 Those gentle hours that plenty bade to bloom,
 Those calm desires that asked but little room,
 Those healthful sports that graced the peaceful scene,
 Lived in each look, and brightened all the green.
 These, far departing, seek a kinder shore,
 And rural mirth and manners are no more.

Sweet Auburn! parent of the blissful hour,
 Thy glades forlorn confess the tyrant's power.
 Here, as I take my solitary rounds
 Amidst thy tangling walks and ruined grounds,
 And, many a year elapsed, return to view
 Where once the cottage stood, the hawthorn grew,
 Remembrance wakes with all her busy train,
 Swells at my breast, and turns the past to pain.

In all my wanderings round this world of care,
 In all my griefs—and God has given my share—
 I still had hopes, my latest hours to crown,
 Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down;
 To husband out life's taper at the close,
 And keep the flame from wasting by repose;
 I still had hopes—for pride attends us still—
 Amidst the swains to show my book-learned skill,
 Around my fire an evening group to draw,
 And tell of all I felt, and all I saw;
 And, as an hare whom hounds and horns pursue
 Pants to the place from whence at first she flew,
 I still had hopes, my long vexations past,
 Here to return—and die at home at last.

O blest retirement! friend to life's decline,
 Retreats from care, that never must be mine,

How blest is he who crowns in shades like these
 A youth of labor with an age of ease;
 Who quits a world where strong temptations try,
 And, since 'tis hard to combat, learns to fly!
 For him no wretches, born to work and weep,
 Explore the mine or tempt the dangerous deep;
 No surly porter stands in guilty state,
 To spurn imploring famine, from the gate;
 But on he moves to meet his latter end,
 Angels around befriending virtue's friend;
 Bends to the grave with unperceived decay,
 While resignation gently slopes the way;
 And, all his prospects brightening to the last,
 His heaven commences ere the world be past.

Sweet was the sound, when oft at evening's close^a
 Up yonder hill the village murmur rose.
 There, as I passed with careless steps and slow,
 The mingling notes came softened from below:
 The swain responsive as the milkmaid sung;
 The sober herd that lowed to meet their young;
 The noisy geese that gabbled o'er the pool;
 The playful children just let loose from school;
 The watch-dog's voice that bayed the whispering wind,
 And the loud laugh that spoke the vacant mind—
 These all in sweet confusion sought the shade,
 And filled each pause the nightingale had made.
 But now the sounds of population fail,
 No cheerful murmurs fluctuate in the gale,
 No busy steps the grass-grown footway tread,
 But all the bloomy flush of life is fled—
 All but yon widowed, solitary thing
 That feebly bends beside the plashy spring;
 She, wretched matron—forced in age, for bread,
 To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread,
 To pick her wintry fagot from the thorn,
 To seek her nightly shed, and weep till morn—

^aat evening's close. As evening draws close.



She only left of all the harmless train,
The sad historian of the pensive plain.

Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,
And still where many a garden flower grows wild,
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,
The village preacher's⁹ modest mansion rose.
A man he was to all the country dear,
And passing rich with forty pounds a year.¹⁰
Remote from towns, he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change his place;
Unpracticed he to fawn or seek for power,
By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour;
Far other aims his heart had learned to prize,
More skilled to raise the wretched than to rise.
His house was known to all the vagrant train,
He chid their wanderings, but relieved their pain;
The long-remembered beggar was his guest,
Whose beard descending swept his aged breast;
The ruined spendthrift, now no longer proud,
Claimed kindred there, and had his claims allowed;
The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
Sat by his fire, and talked the night away;
Wept o'er his wounds, or, tales of sorrow done,
Shouldered his crutch, and showed how fields were won.
Pleased with his guests, the good man learned to glow,
And quite forgot their vices in their woe;
Careless their merits or their faults to scan,
His pity gave ere charity began.



Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,
And e'en his failings leaned to virtue's side;
But in his duty prompt at every call,
He watched and wept, he prayed and felt for all.

⁹*village preacher.* Goldsmith's father and brother were both village preachers.

¹⁰*passing rich with forty pounds a year.* He was well off with less than \$200 a year.

And as a bird each fond endearment tries
 To tempt its new-fledged offspring to the skies,
 He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
 Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.

Beside the bed where parting life was laid,
 And sorrow, guilt, and pain, by turns dismayed,
 The reverend champion stood. At his control
 Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul;
 Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,
 And his last faltering accents whispered praise.

At church, with meek and unaffected grace,
 His looks adorned the venerable place;
 Truth from his lips prevailed with double sway,
 And fools, who came to scoff, remained to pray.
 The service past, around the pious man,
 With steady zeal, each honest rustic ran;
 Even children followed, with endearing wile,
 And plucked his gown, to share the good man's smile.
 His ready smile a parent's warmth expressed,
 Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distressed;
 To them his heart, his love, his griefs, were given,
 But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven;
 As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
 Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
 Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
 Eternal sunshine settles on its head.



Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way
 With blossomed furze unprofitably gay,
 There, in his noisy mansion, skilled to rule,
 The village master¹¹ taught his little school.
 A man severe he was, and stern to view;
 I knew him well, and every truant knew.
 Well had the boding tremblers learned to trace
 The day's disasters in his morning face;

¹¹*village master.* Probably Thomas Byrne, Goldsmith's first teacher.

Full well they laughed, with counterfeited glee,
 At all his jokes, for many a joke had he;
 Full well the busy whisper, circling round,
 Conveyed the dismal tidings when he frowned.
 Yet he was kind, or, if severe in aught,
 The love he bore to learning was in fault.
 The village all declared how much he knew;
 'Twas certain he could write, and cipher, too;
 Lands he could measure, terms¹² and tides presage,
 And even the story ran that he could gauge;¹³
 In arguing, too, the parson owned his skill,
 For even though vanquished he could argue still;
 While words of learned length and thundering sound
 Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around;
 And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew
 That one small head could carry all he knew.
 But past is all his fame. The very spot
 Where many a time he triumphed is forgot.

Near yonder thorn, that lifts its head on high,
 Where once the signpost caught the passing eye,
 Low lies that house where nut-brown drafts inspired,
 Where graybeard mirth and smiling toil retired,
 Where village statesmen talked with looks profound,
 And news much older than their ale went round.
 Imagination fondly stoops to trace
 The parlor splendors of that festive place:
 The whitewashed wall, the nicely sanded floor,
 The varnished clock that ticked behind the door,
 The chest, contrived a double debt to pay,
 A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day,
 The pictures placed for ornament and use,¹⁴
 The twelve good rules,¹⁵ the royal game of goose,¹⁶



¹²*terms*. The dates of court sessions were set in relation to Easter and so varied from year to year.

¹³*gauge*. He could compute the fluid contents of casks.

¹⁴*use*. To keep out drafts.

¹⁵*twelve good rules*. These rules, attributed to Charles I, were often hung in taverns. Typical were such admonitions as "Pick no quarrels," "Lay no wagers."

¹⁶*game of goose*. A game similar to checkers.

The hearth, except when winter chilled the day,
 With aspen boughs, and flowers, and fennel gay,
 While broken teacups, wisely kept for show,
 Ranged o'er the chimney, glistened in a row.

Vain, transitory splendors! could not all
 Reprieve the tottering mansion from its fall?
 Obscure it sinks, nor shall it more impart
 An hour's importance to the poor man's heart.
 Thither no more the peasant shall repair
 To sweet oblivion of his daily care;
 No more the farmer's news, the barber's tale,
 No more the woodman's ballad shall prevail;
 No more the smith his dusky brow shall clear,
 Relax his ponderous strength, and lean to hear;
 The host himself no longer shall be found
 Careful to see the mantling bliss go round;
 Nor the coy maid, half willing to be pressed,
 Shall kiss the cup to pass it to the rest.

Yes! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
 These simple blessings of the lowly train;
 To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
 One native charm, than all the gloss of art.
 Spontaneous joys, where nature has its play,
 The soul adopts, and owns their first-born sway;
 Lightly they frolic o'er the vacant mind,
 Unenvied, unmolested, unconfined.
 But the long pomp, the midnight masquerade,
 With all the freaks of wanton wealth arrayed—
 In these, ere triflers half their wish obtain,
 The toiling pleasure sickens into pain;
 And even while fashion's brightest arts decoy,
 The heart, distrusting, asks if this be joy.

Ye friends to truth, ye statesmen who survey
 The rich man's joys increase, the poor's decay,

'Tis yours to judge how wide the limits stand
 Between a splendid and a happy land.
 Proud swells the tide with loads of freighted ore,
 And shouting Folly hails them from her shore;
 Hoards e'en beyond the miser's wish abound,
 And rich men flock from all the world around.
 Yet count our gains! This wealth is but a name
 That leaves our useful products still the same.
 Not so the loss. The man of wealth and pride
 Takes up a space that many poor supplied;
 Space for his lake, his park's extended bounds,
 Space for his horses, equipage, and hounds;
 The robe that wraps his limbs in silken sloth
 Has robbed the neighboring fields of half their growth;
 His seat, where solitary sports are seen,
 Indignant spurns the cottage from the green;
 Around the world each needful product flies,
 For all the luxuries the world supplies;
 While thus the land, adorned for pleasure, all
 In barren splendor feebly waits the fall.

As some fair female, unadorned and plain,
 Secure to please while youth confirms her reign,
 Slight's every borrowed charm that dress supplies,
 Nor shares with art the triumph of her eyes;
 But when those charms are past, for charms are frail,
 When time advances, and when lovers fail,
 She then shines forth, solicitous to bless,
 In all the glaring impotence of dress.
 Thus fares the land, by luxury betrayed,
 In nature's simplest charms at first arrayed;
 But, verging to decline, its splendors rise,
 Its vistas strike, its palaces surprise;
 While, scourged by famine from the smiling land,
 The mournful peasant leads his humble band;
 And while he sinks, without one arm to save,
 The country blooms—a garden and a grave.

Where then, ah! where shall poverty reside,
 To 'scape the pressure of contiguous pride?
 If to some common's fenceless limits strayed,
 He drives his flock to pick the scanty blade,
 Those fenceless fields the sons of wealth divide,
 And even the bare-worn common is denied.

If to the city sped, what waits him there?
 To see profusion that he must not share;
 To see ten thousand baneful arts combined
 To pamper luxury, and thin mankind;
 To see those joys the sons of pleasure know
 Extorted from his fellow-creature's woe.
 Here, while the courtier glitters in brocade,
 There the pale artist plies the sickly trade;
 Here, while the proud their long-drawn pomps display,
 There the black gibbet glooms beside the way.
 The dome where Pleasure holds her midnight reign,
 Here, richly decked, admits the gorgeous train;
 Tumultuous grandeur crowds the blazing square,
 The rattling chariots clash, the torches glare.
 Sure scenes like these no troubles e'er annoy!
 Sure these denote one universal joy!

.

O luxury! thou cursed by Heaven's decree,
 How ill exchanged are things like these for thee!
 How do thy potions, with insidious joy,
 Diffuse their pleasures only to destroy!
 Kingdoms by thee, to sickly greatness grown,
 Boast of a florid vigor not their own.
 At every draft more large and large they grow,
 A bloated mass of rank, unwieldy woe;
 Till sapped their strength, and every part unsound,
 Down, down they sink, and spread a ruin round.

Even now the devastation is begun,
 And half the business of destruction done;

Even now, methinks, as pondering here I stand,
 I see the rural virtues leave the land.
 Down where yon anchoring vessel spreads the sail
 That, idly waiting, flaps with every gale,
 Downward they move, a melancholy band,
 Pass from the shore, and darken all the strand.
 Contented Toil, and hospitable Care,
 And kind, connubial Tenderness are there;
 And Piety with wishes placed above,
 And steady Loyalty, and faithful Love.
 And thou, sweet Poetry, thou loveliest maid,
 Still first to fly where sensual joys invade;
 Unfit, in these degenerate times of shame,
 To catch the heart, or strike for honest fame;
 Dear charming nymph, neglected and decried,
 My shame in crowds, my solitary pride;
 Thou source of all my bliss and all my woe,
 That found'st me poor at first, and keep'st me so;
 Thou guide, by which the nobler arts excel,
 Thou nurse of every virtue, fare thee well!
 Farewell! and oh! where'er thy voice be tried,
 On Torno's cliffs, or Pambamarca's¹⁷ side,
 Whether where equinoctial fervors glow,
 Or winter wraps the polar world in snow,
 Still let thy voice, prevailing over time,
 Redress the rigors of the inclement clime;
 Aid slighted truth with thy persuasive strain;
 Teach erring man to spurn the rage of gain;
 Teach him that states of native strength possessed,
 Though very poor, may still be very blest;
 That trade's proud empire hastes to swift decay,
 As ocean sweeps the labored mole¹⁸ away;
 While self-dependent power can time defy,
 As rocks resist the billows and the sky.¹⁹

¹⁷*Torno . . . Pambamarca.* The Tornio is a river in Finland. Pambamarca is a mountain in Ecuador.

¹⁸*mole.* A breakwater or barrier of stone built to protect a harbor.

¹⁹According to Boswell, Samuel Johnson contributed the last four lines of the poem.

Discussion

1. What is the theme of "The Deserted Village"?
2. Point out the line which introduces the first pessimistic note.
3. What is your opinion of Goldsmith's claim that
 "Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
 Where wealth accumulates, and men decay."
4. To what does Goldsmith attribute the decline of villages like Auburn? Viewing the situation from the longer perspective of our own day, to what extent were Goldsmith's complaints justified? To what extent was he wrong?
5. The character sketches of the parson and the schoolmaster are wonderfully complete. What qualities made these men seem memorable to Goldsmith? Quote lines to support your opinions.
6. What do you think Goldsmith meant by saying of the parson, "e'en his failings leaned to virtue's side"? How could anyone have virtuous failings?
7. Describe the village tavern. Do you think the parson attacked it in his sermons? Support your answer with quotations.
8. What hardships awaited villagers who sought a living in cities? Point out phrases which might apply to life in cities today.
9. Why does Goldsmith say goodbye to the muse of Poetry? What does he beg her to do in other countries before it is too late?
10. Find half a dozen good figures of speech. Analyze each.

Research

1. Select a dozen or more lines to memorize. What do the lines mean in context? How can they be applied to life today?
2. An interesting comparison can be made of rustic life as described in "The Deserted Village" and as described in Milton's "L'Allegro," page 384. Account for the similarities and the differences.
3. "The Deserted Village" does not exhaust Goldsmith's knowledge of parsons. His novel, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, is a good-humored account of a country parson who meets all sorts of tribulations with unquenchable optimism. With its honest sentiment and its many amusing comments on life, *The Vicar of Wakefield* is a novel that lends itself well to an oral report.

ROBERT BURNS was born on a rented farm at Alloway, in Ayrshire, Scotland. The oldest of seven children, he grew up in poverty, with much hard work and little formal education. The family moved often in the vain hope of improving their lot. Poor as they were, the elder Burns sought to educate his children and introduce them to the best in both Scottish and English literature.

By the time Robert was twenty-one he had achieved a local reputation as a poet and had also, unfortunately, begun to drown his disappointments in drink. He was in love with Jean Armour and wanted to marry her, but her father flatly refused. By 1786 Burns had apparently decided to marry Mary Campbell and leave Scotland to take a job as bookkeeper on a plantation in Jamaica. To finance the trip he published a collection of *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect*. His plans for emigration were dropped, however, when Mary died and his poems proved immensely popular. In 1788 he married Jean, his first love, and the following year friends in Edinburgh obtained for him a post as tax collector at Dumfries. Here a third edition of his poems was issued in 1793. His health weakened by early hardships and later excessive drinking, Burns died at the age of thirty-seven.

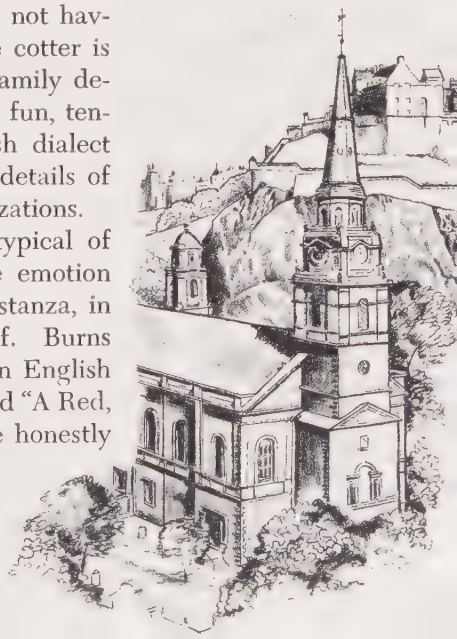
One of the poems on which Burns' fame rests most securely is "The Cotter's Saturday Night," with its lovingly detailed picture of family life. Robert's brother Gilbert said of the poem's origin, "Robert had frequently remarked to me that he thought there was something peculiarly venerable in the phrase 'Let us worship God,' used by a decent, sober head of a family, introducing family worship." While much of the poem is fictional, the Burns children not having been sent out in service, Gilbert added, "The cotter is an exact copy of my father, in his manners, his family devotion, and exhortations." Marked alternately by fun, tenderness, and pathos, the poem combines Scottish dialect and English, the Scottish being reserved for the details of family life and the English for the poet's generalizations.

Among the shorter poems, "To a Mouse" is typical of Burns' sympathetic appreciation of nature. The emotion is genuine, and there is deep pathos in the final stanza, in which Burns turns his inward eye upon himself. Burns wrote some of the most affecting poems of love in English literature, among them the passionately exaggerated "A Red, Red Rose," the wistfully yearning "Jean," and the honestly sentimental "Afton Water."



ROBERT BURNS

1759–1796



The Cotter's Saturday Night

INSCRIBED TO ROBERT AIKEN, ESQ.



- 1 MY LOVED, my honored, much respected friend!
 No mercenary bard his homage pays;
With honest pride, I scorn each selfish end,
 My dearest meed a friend's esteem and praise;
 To you I sing, in simple Scottish lays,
The lowly train in life's sequester'd scene,
 The native feelings strong, the guileless ways,
What Aiken in a cottage would have been;
Ah, tho' his worth unknown, far happier there, I ween!
- 2 November chill blows loud wi' angry sugh;
 The short'ning winter day is near a close;
The miry beasts retreating frae the pleugh;
 The black'ning trains o' craws to their repose.
 The toilworn cottar frae his labor goes—
This night his weekly moil¹ is at an end—
 Collects his spades, his mattocks, and his hoes,
Hoping the morn in ease and rest to spend,
And weary, o'er the moor, his course does hameward bend.

¹moil. Drudgery.

*Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
 Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
 Nor Grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,
 The short and simple annals of the poor.*

GRAY



3 At length his lonely cot appears in view,
 Beneath the shelter of an aged tree;
 Th' expectant wee things, toddlin', stacher through
 To meet their dad, wi' flichterin' noise and glee.
 His wee bit ingle,² blinkin bonilie,
 His clean hearthstane, his thrifty wifie's smile,
 The lispin infant, prattlin on his knee,
 Does a' his weary kiaugh³ and care beguile,
 And makes him quite forget his labor and his toil.

4 Belyve⁴ the elder bairns come drapping in,
 At service out, among the farmers roun';
 Some ca' the pleugh, some herd, some tentie⁵ rin
 A cannie errand to a neebor town.
 Their eldest hope, their Jenny, woman-grown,
 In youthfu' bloom, love sparkling in her e'e,
 Comes hame, perhaps to shew a braw new gown,
 Or deposit her sair-won penny-fee,
 To help her parents dear if they in hardship be.

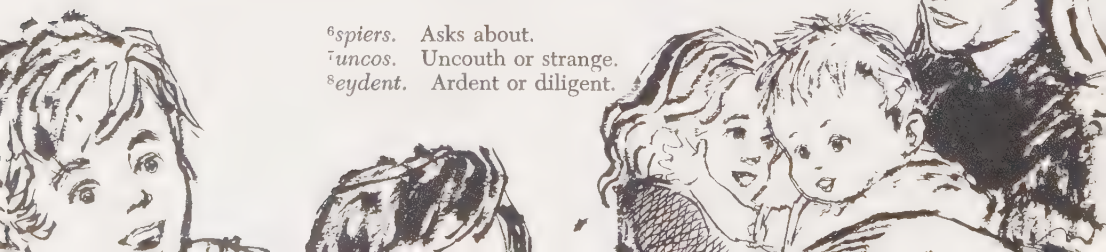
²ingle. An open fire, as in a fireplace.

³kiaugh. Worry.

⁴Belyve. Soon.

⁵tentie. Attentively.

- 5 With joy unfeigned, brothers and sisters meet,
 And each for other's weelfare kindly spiers;⁶
 The social hours, swift-winged, unnoticed fleet;
 Each tells the uncos⁷ that he sees or hears.
 The parents, partial, eye their hopeful years;
 Anticipation forward points the view.
 The mother, wi' her needle and her sheers,
 Gars auld claes look amaist as weel's the new;
 The father mixes a' wi' admonition due:
- 6 Their master's and their mistress's command
 The yonkers a' are warnèd to obey,
 An' mind their labors wi' an eydent⁸ hand,
 An' ne'er, though out o' sight, to jauk or play;
 "An' O! be sure to fear the Lord alway,
 An' mind your duty, duly, morn an' night;
 Lest in temptation's path ye gang astray,
 Implore His counsel and assisting might;
 They never sought in vain that sought the Lord aright!"
- 7 But hark! a rap comes gently to the door;
 Jenny, wha kens the meaning o' the same,
 Tells how a neibor lad cam o'er the moor,
 To do some errands, and convoy her hame.
 The wily mother sees the conscious flame
 Sparkle in Jenny's e'e, and flush her cheek;
 Wi' heart-struck, anxious care, inquires his name,
 While Jenny hafflins is afraid to speak;
 Weel pleased the mother hears it's nae wild worthless rake.

⁶*spiers.* Asks about.⁷*uncos.* Uncouth or strange.⁸*eydent.* Ardent or diligent.

8 Wi' kindly welcome Jenny brings him ben,⁹
 A strappin' youth; he takes the mother's eye;
 Blythe Jenny sees the visit's no ill taen;
 The father cracks of horses, pleughs, and kye,
 The youngster's artless heart o'erflows wi' joy,
 But blate and laithfu',¹⁰ scarce can weel behave;
 The mother, wi' a woman's wiles, can spy
 What makes the youth sae bashfu' and sae grave,
 Weel pleased to think her bairn's respected like the lave.¹¹

9 O happy love! where love like this is found!
 O heartfelt raptures! bliss beyond compare!
 I've pacèd much this weary, mortal round,
 And sage experience bids me this declare—
 "If Heaven a draft of heavenly pleasure spare,
 One cordial in this melancholy vale,
 'Tis when a youthful, loving, modest pair
 In other's arms breathe out the tender tale,
 Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the evening gale."

10 Is there, in human form, that bears a heart,
 A wretch! a villain! lost to love and truth!
 That can, with studied, sly, ensnaring art,
 Betray sweet Jenny's unsuspecting youth?
 Curse on his perjured arts! dissembling smooth!
 Are honor, virtue, conscience, all exiled?
 Is there no pity, no relenting ruth,
 Points to the parents fondling o'er their child;
 Then paints the ruined maid, and their distraction wild?

⁹*brings him ben.* Brings him into the parlor.

¹⁰*blate and laithfu'.* Bashful and shy.

¹¹*lave.* Rest.





11 But now the supper crowns their simple board,
The halesome parritch, chief of Scotia's food;
The sowpe their only hawkie¹² does afford,
That yont the hallan¹³ snugly chows her cood.
The dame brings forth, in complimental mood,
To grace the lad, her weel-hained kebbuck fell;¹⁴
An' aft he's prest an' aft he ca's it guid.
The frugal wifie, garrulous, will tell
How 'twas a towmond auld, sin' lint was i' the bell.¹⁵

12 The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face,
They round the ingle form a circle wide;
The sire turns o'er, with patriarchal grace
The big ha' Bible,¹⁶ ance his father's pride.
His bonnet reverently is laid aside,
His lyart haffets¹⁷ wearing thin and bare;
Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide,
He wales¹⁸ a portion with judicious care;
And "Let us worship God!" he says with solemn air.

13 They chant their artless notes in simple guise;
They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim;
Perhaps "Dundee's" wild-warbling measures rise,
Or plaintive "Martyrs," worthy of the name;
Or noble "Elgin" beets the heavenward flame,
The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays.
Compared with these, Italian trills are tame;
The tickled ears no heartfelt raptures raise;
Nae unison hae they with our Creator's praise.

¹²sowpe . . . hawkie. Milk . . . cow.

¹³yont the hallan. Beyond the partition.

¹⁴weel-hained kebbuck fell. Well-preserved strong cheese.

¹⁵a towmond auld, sin' lint was i' the bell. Twelve months old since the flax was in bloom.

¹⁶ha' Bible. Hall Bible; the one kept in the hall or living room.

¹⁷lyart haffets. Gray temples.

¹⁸wales. Chooses.

- 14 The priestlike father reads the sacred page;
How Abram was the friend of God on high;
Or Moses bade eternal warfare wage
With Amalek's ungracious progeny;
Or how the royal bard did groaning lie
Beneath the stroke of Heaven's avenging ire;
Or Job's pathetic plaint and wailing cry;
Or rapt Isaiah's wild, seraphic fire;
Or other holy seers that tune the sacred lyre.
- 15 Perhaps the Christian volume is the theme,
How guiltless blood for guilty man was shed;
How He Who bore in Heaven the second name
Had not on earth whereon to lay His head;
How His first followers and servants sped;
The precepts sage they wrote to many a land;
How he, who lone in Patmos banished,
Saw in the sun a mighty angel stand,
And heard great Bab'lon's doom pronounced by Heaven's command.
- 16 Then kneeling down to heaven's Eternal King,
The saint, the father, and the husband prays;
Hope "springs exulting on triumphant wing."¹⁹
That thus they all shall meet in future days,
There ever bask in uncreated rays,
No more to sigh or shed the bitter tear,
Together hymning their Creator's praise,
In such society, yet still more dear,
While circling Time moves round in an eternal sphere.
- 17 Compared with this, how poor Religion's pride,
In all the pomp of method and of art,
When men display to congregations wide
Devotion's ev'ry grace except the heart!
The Power, incensed, the pageant will desert,
The pompous strain, the sacerdotal stole;
But haply, in some cottage far apart,
May hear, well-pleased, the language of the soul,
And in His Book of Life the inmates poor enroll.



¹⁹The quotation is from Alexander Pope's "Windsor Forest."

- 18 Then homeward all take off their sev'ral way;
 The youngling cottagers retire to rest;
 The parent pair their secret homage pay,
 And proffer up to Heaven the warm request
 That He Who stills the raven's clam'rous nest,
 And decks the lily fair in flow'ry pride,
 Would, in the way His wisdom sees the best,
 For them and for their little ones provide;
 But chiefly in their hearts with grace divine preside.
- 19 From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur springs,
 That makes her loved at home, revered abroad.
 Princes and lords are but the breath of kings,
 "An honest man's the noblest work of God."²⁰
 And certes in fair Virtue's heavenly road,
 The cottage leaves the palace far behind.
 What is a lordling's pomp? a cumbrous load,
 Disguising oft the wretch of human kind,
 Studied in arts of hell, in wickedness refined!

²⁰This quotation is from Pope's "Essay on Man."

Discussion

1. Why did Burns choose to describe a Saturday evening rather than some other time?
2. What does Burns say to Aiken in the first stanza? What does this stanza tell us about Aiken? About Burns?
3. Contrast the pictures given in stanzas 2 and 3.
4. What advice does the cotter give his children? How does it compare with the advice your father gives you?
5. How does the mother discover Jenny has a "boy friend"? Why is the mother anxious? What characteristics of the young man win her over?
6. Point out passages which show Burns' reverence for God; his reverence for family life.

- 20 O Scotia! my dear, my native soil!
 For whom my warmest wish to Heaven is sent,
 Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil
 Be blest with health, and peace, and sweet content!
 And oh! may Heaven their simple lives prevent
 From luxury's contagion, weak and vile!
 Then, howe'er crowns and coronets be rent,
 A virtuous populace may rise the while,
 And stand a wall of fire around their much-loved isle.
- 21 O Thou! who poured the patriotic tide
 That streamed through Wallace's undaunted heart,
 Who dared to nobly stem tyrannic pride,
 Or nobly die, the second glorious part—
 (The patriot's God peculiarly thou art,
 His friend, inspirer, guardian, and reward!)
 O never, never Scotia's realm desert,
 But still the patriot, and the patriot-bard,
 In bright succession raise, her ornament and guard!

-
7. The cotter's family is obviously hard-working and poor. What is the basis of their happiness?
 8. What is Burns' "warmest wish" for his native land?
 9. Why do you think Burns chose to head his poem with the stanza from Gray's "Elegy in a Country Churchyard"?
 10. How does the poem reflect eighteenth-century style? In what way does it break with this style?

Research

Among later poets influenced by Burns was the American John Greenleaf Whittier. For an American parallel to "The Cotter's Saturday Night" you might read Whittier's "Snow-bound." What similarities of detail and of spirit do you find?

To a Mouse

ON TURNING HER UP IN HER NEST WITH
THE PLOW, NOVEMBER, 1785

Wee, sleekit, cowrin', tim'rous beastie,
O, what a panic's in thy breastie!
Thou need na start awa sae hasty
Wi' bickering brattle!¹
I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee
Wi' murd'rin' pattle!²

I'm truly sorry man's dominion
Has broken nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion
Which makes thee startle
At me, thy poor, earthborn companion,
An' fellow mortal!

I doubt na, whyles,³ but thou may thieve;
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!
A daimen icker in a thrave⁴
'S a sma' request;
I'll get a blessin' wi' the lave,⁵
An' never miss't!

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!
It's silly wa's the win's are strewin'!
An' naething, now, to big⁶ a new ane,
O' foggage⁷ green!
An' bleak December's winds ensuin',
Baith snell⁸ an' keen!

¹*bickering brattle.* Running about.

²*pattle.* Small spade with a long handle.

³*whyles.* Once in a while.

⁴*A daimen icker in a thrave.* An occasional head of grain in a stack of sheaves.

⁵*lave.* Rest.

⁶*big.* Build.

⁷*foggage.* Grass.

⁸*snell.* Sharp.



Thou saw the fields laid bare and waste,
 An' weary winter comin' fast,
 An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
 Thou thought to dwell,
 Till crash! the cruel coulter⁹ past
 Out through thy cell.

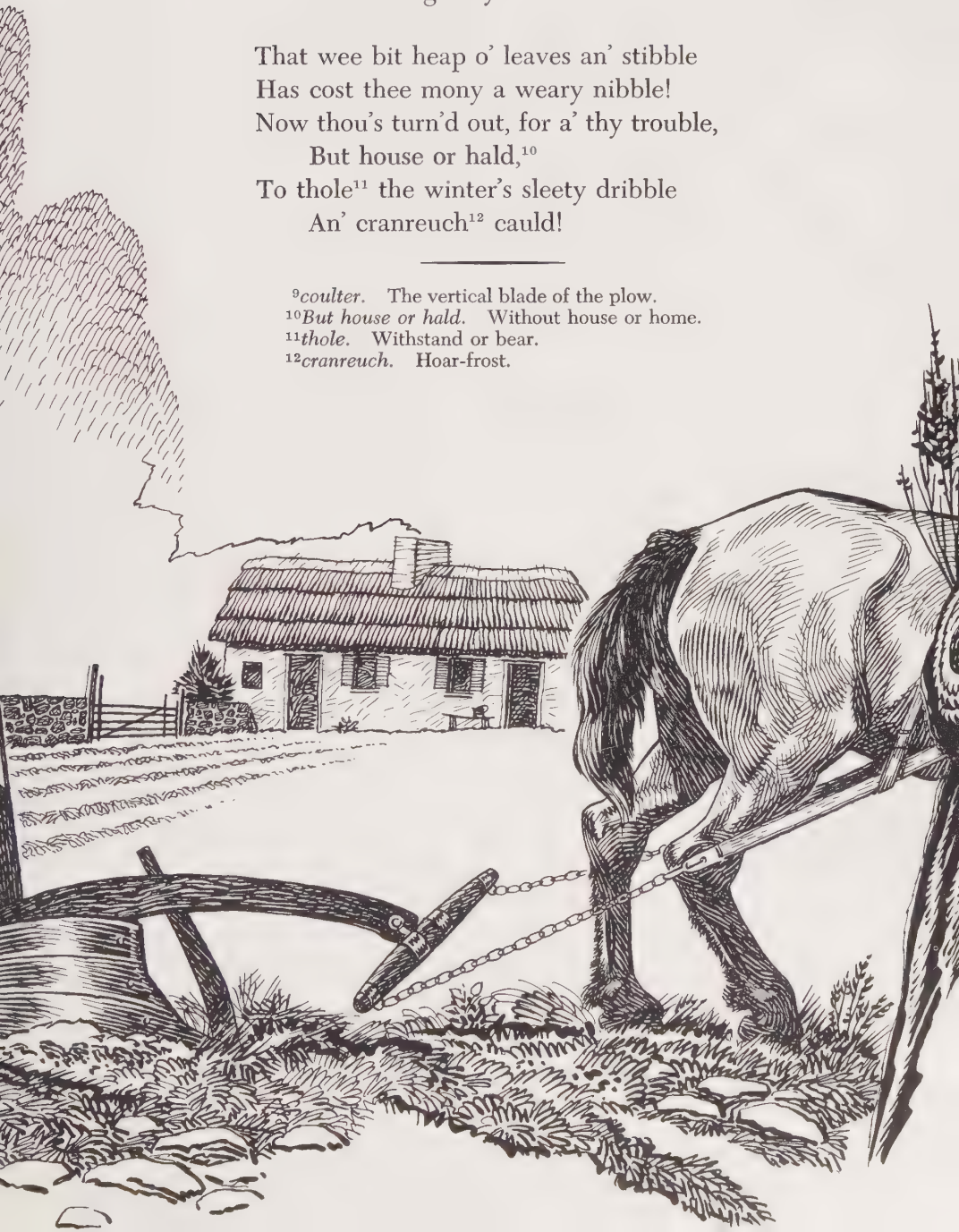
That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble
 Has cost thee mony a weary nibble!
 Now thou's turn'd out, for a' thy trouble,
 But house or hald,¹⁰
 To thole¹¹ the winter's sleety dribble
 An' cranreuch¹² cauld!

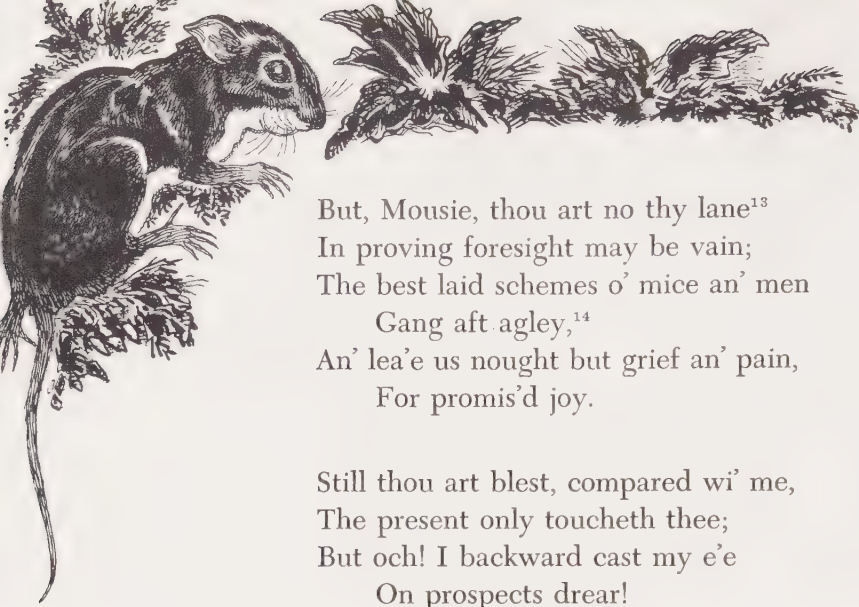
⁹*coulter*. The vertical blade of the plow.

¹⁰*But house or hald*. Without house or home.

¹¹*thole*. Withstand or bear.

¹²*cranreuch*. Hoar-frost.





But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane¹³
In proving foresight may be vain;
The best laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft agley,¹⁴
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain,
For promis'd joy.

Still thou art blest, compared wi' me,
The present only toucheth thee;
But och! I backward cast my e'e
On prospects drear!
An' forward, though I canna see,
I guess an' fear!

¹³*no thy lane.* Not alone.

¹⁴*Gang aft agley.* Often go wrong.

Discussion

1. What does Burns mean by saying “man’s dominion has broken nature’s social union”?
2. Quote the lines which express the theme of the poem. What do they mean in a larger sense?
3. Explain the last stanza in your own words. Think it over, and then decide whether or not you agree with Burns.
4. Why does the Scottish dialect seem particularly appropriate to this poem?

Research

Another Burns poem, “To a Louse,” is often compared to this one. You might make a study of the two poems and write a brief essay pointing out their similarities of subject matter, treatment, and theme. You will find a rather famous quotation in “To a Louse.”

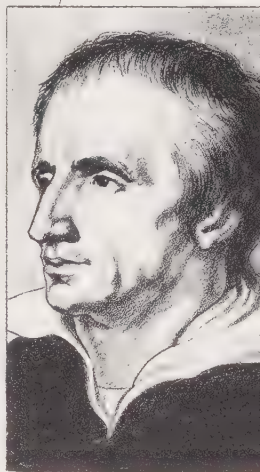


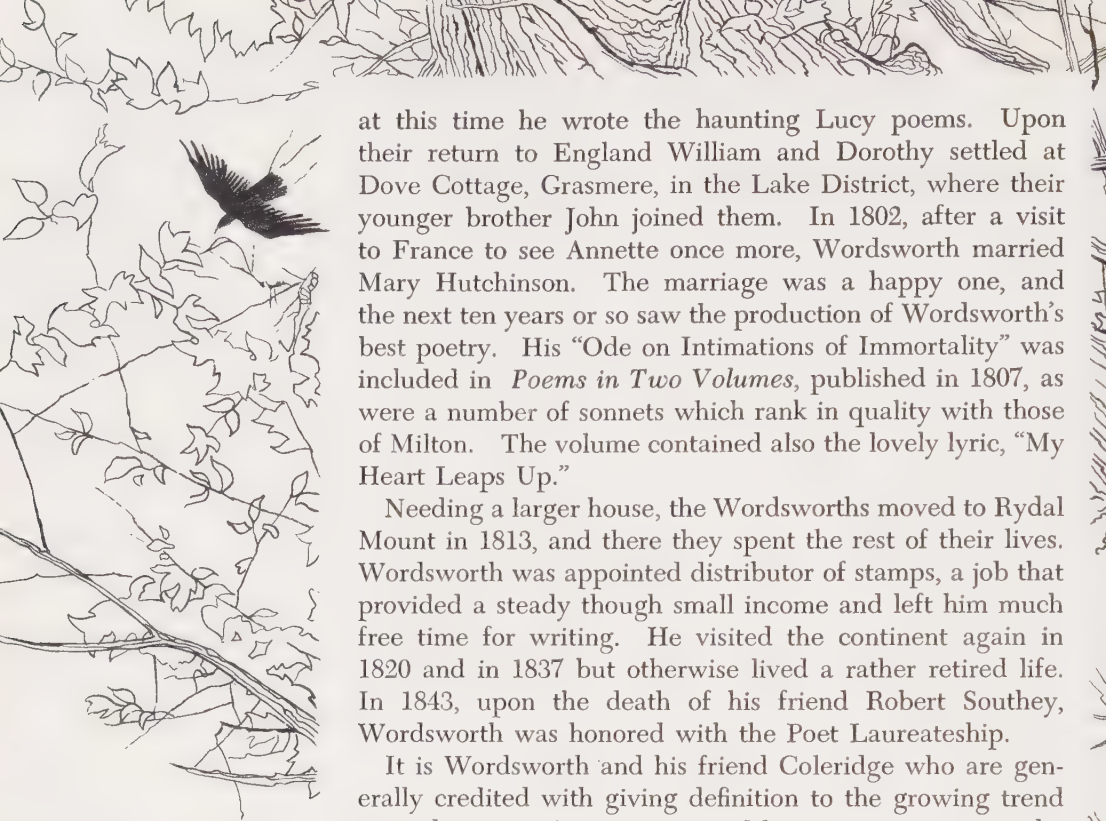
THE son of an attorney, William Wordsworth was born at Cockermouth, on the northern edge of the English Lake District. It was in the local "infant school" that William became acquainted with Mary Hutchinson, whom he was to marry many years later and eulogize in his poem, "She Was a Phantom of Delight." William's mother died when he was eight, and his father died when he was seventeen. His uncles, who became his guardians, sent him to Cambridge, where he received his degree in 1791.

Following his graduation Wordsworth went to France, where he fell in love with Annette Vallon. Desiring to marry her, Wordsworth returned to England to ask his uncles for permission and an increase in his allowance. The outbreak of war between England and France prevented Wordsworth's return to France. The war shattered both his love affair and his faith in the ideals of the French Revolution.

In 1795 Wordsworth inherited a small sum of money from a friend and settled in Dorsetshire with his sister Dorothy as his housekeeper. Later they moved to Alfoxden in Somersetshire to be near Samuel Taylor Coleridge, whose friendship meant much to Wordsworth and who influenced greatly the direction of Wordsworth's poetic talents. In 1798 Wordsworth and Coleridge published what was to become one of the most famous volumes in English poetry, *Lyrical Ballads with a Few Other Poems*. In its revolt against the artificiality of 18th century poetry, the book came to be considered the manifesto of the Romantic Movement.

The winter of 1798-99 Wordsworth and his sister spent in Germany. It was not a happy period, and William longed for the companionship of his friends in England. It was





at this time he wrote the haunting Lucy poems. Upon their return to England William and Dorothy settled at Dove Cottage, Grasmere, in the Lake District, where their younger brother John joined them. In 1802, after a visit to France to see Annette once more, Wordsworth married Mary Hutchinson. The marriage was a happy one, and the next ten years or so saw the production of Wordsworth's best poetry. His "Ode on Intimations of Immortality" was included in *Poems in Two Volumes*, published in 1807, as were a number of sonnets which rank in quality with those of Milton. The volume contained also the lovely lyric, "My Heart Leaps Up."

Needing a larger house, the Wordsworths moved to Rydal Mount in 1813, and there they spent the rest of their lives. Wordsworth was appointed distributor of stamps, a job that provided a steady though small income and left him much free time for writing. He visited the continent again in 1820 and in 1837 but otherwise lived a rather retired life. In 1843, upon the death of his friend Robert Southey, Wordsworth was honored with the Poet Laureateship.

It is Wordsworth and his friend Coleridge who are generally credited with giving definition to the growing trend toward romanticism in poetry. Meeting as young men the two poets, so different in their personalities, stimulated each other and together gave focus to the divergent aspects of romanticism. Their joint volume, *Lyrical Ballads*, set the pattern for the Romantic Movement which was to give its name to the first third of the nineteenth century. Coleridge's poems gave an illusion of reality to highly mystical and supernatural subjects, while Wordsworth's poems gave a spiritual quality and an aura of mysticism to simple, everyday subjects.

Wordsworth was all his life keenly sensitive to nature and found constant delight in its simplest aspects. He chose as his poetic domain "humble and rustic life . . . because in that condition the essential passions of the heart find a better soil." It was his stated aim to write in "a selection of language really used by men." In doing these things he stretched the boundaries of poetry, though the result for a long time was to subject him to the criticism that he was "unpoetic." Slowly but steadily, however, his fame increased. The American poet Emerson called Wordsworth's "Ode on Intimations of Immortality" the "high-water mark of poetry in the nineteenth century."



She Was a Phantom of Delight

She¹ was a Phantom of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight;
A lovely Apparition sent
To be a moment's ornament;
Her eyes as stars of Twilight fair;
Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair;
But all things else about her drawn
From Maytime and the cheerful dawn;
A dancing Shape, an Image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and way-lay.

I saw her upon nearer view,
A Spirit, yet a Woman, too!
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin liberty;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;

¹*She.* Mary Hutchinson, whom Wordsworth married in 1802. They had been married two years when Wordsworth wrote this poem.

A Creature not too bright or good
 For human nature's daily food;
 For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
 Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene
 The very pulse of the machine;
 A Being breathing thoughtful breath,
 A Traveler between life and death;
 The reason firm, the temperate will,
 Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;
 A perfect Woman, nobly planned,
 To warn, to comfort, and command;
 And yet a Spirit still, and bright
 With something of angelic light.

Discussion

1. Point out the progression of acquaintance represented by the three stanzas.
2. What characteristics apparently first attracted Wordsworth to Mary?
3. Which of Mary's characteristics most impressed Wordsworth after they were married?
4. If Mrs. Wordsworth had not been endowed with "endurance," which passages in the poem might she have resented?
5. Point out all the metaphors you can find. Which do you think is the most effective?

Research

Fortunately there have always been more good wives than bad in the world. You might find it interesting to compare Wordsworth's description of a good wife with that in Proverbs, Chap. 31, verses 10-41. Or you might like to make a list of your own. In a brief oral or written report call attention to the points of agreement and disagreement between the lists.

I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

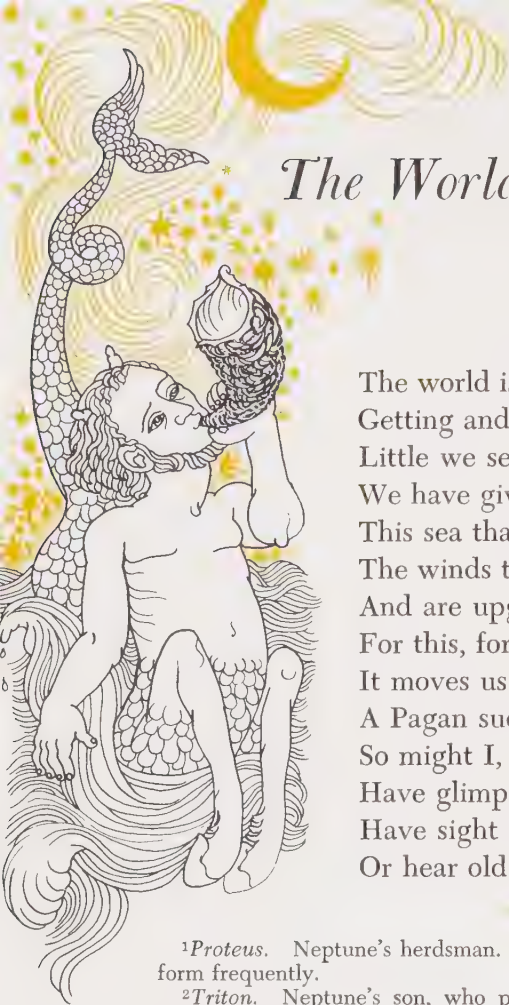
Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay—
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay
In such a jocund company,
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought.

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

Discussion

1. What purpose does each of the four stanzas serve? Which stanza expresses the theme of the poem?
2. How do you interpret the first two lines?
3. What is the “inward eye which is the bliss of solitude”?
4. Wordsworth once wrote that poetry “takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity.” How does the poem illustrate this?
5. Point out and analyze the figures of speech in the poem.



The World Is Too Much with Us

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
This sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are upgathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not.—Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus¹ rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton² blow his wreathèd horn.

¹*Proteus*. Neptune's herdsman. It was difficult to see him because he changed form frequently.

²*Triton*. Neptune's son, who produced the sound of the sea by blowing his conch-shell horn.

Discussion

1. What is the theme of this poem? Which line best summarizes the theme?
2. What powers do we “lay waste” while “getting and spending”? Foreigners often criticize Americans for being too money-conscious. How would you answer this charge?
Why would the poet “rather be a Pagan”? What indication is there that he does not want to be a complete pagan?
How do you interpret the line, “For this, for everything, we are out of tune”?
Why should glimpses of nature make one feel “less forlorn”?

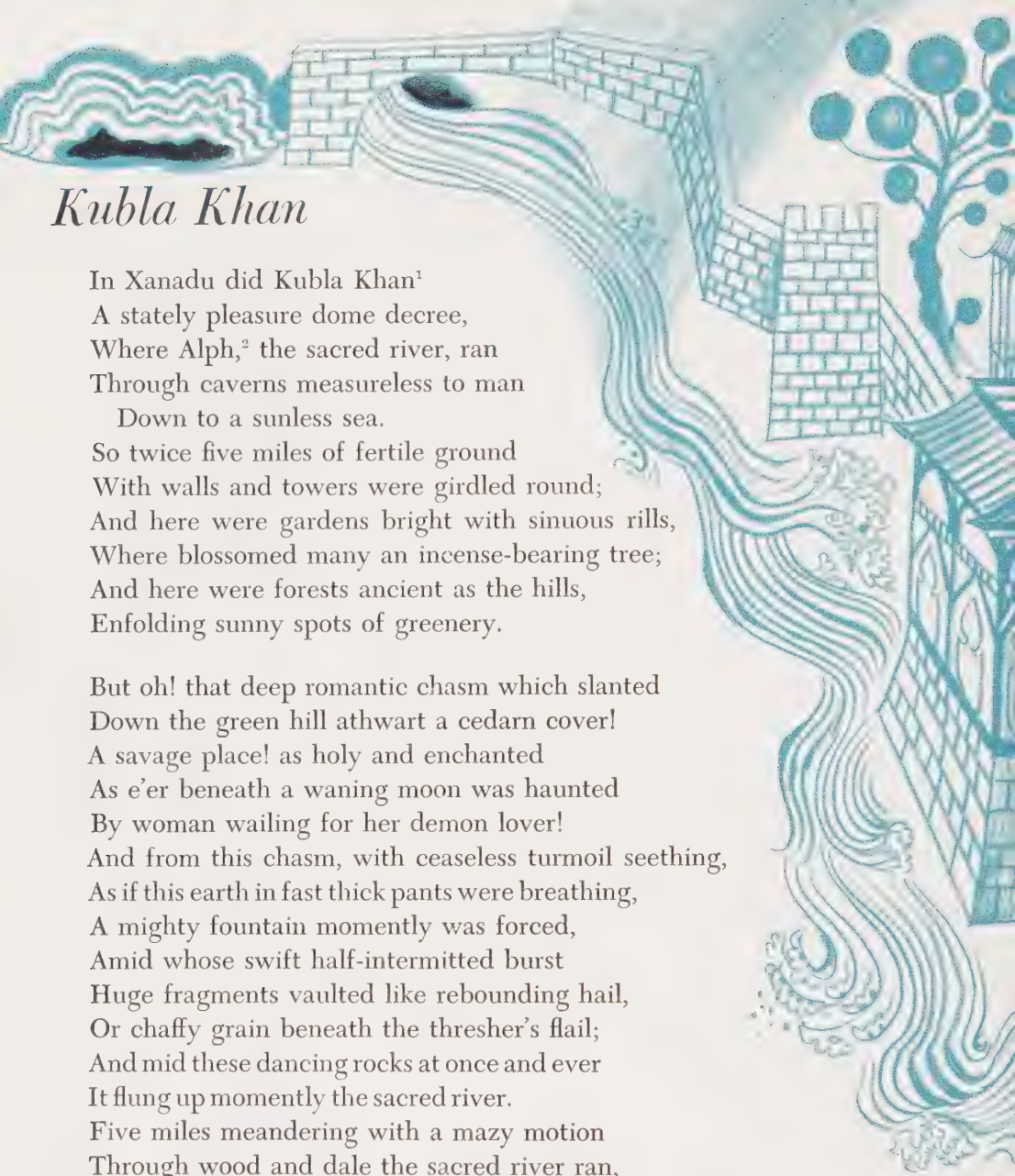
SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE was born at Ottery St. Mary, in Devonshire, where his father was the vicar. Samuel was the thirteenth and youngest child. Following the death of his father in 1781 Samuel was sent to Christ's Hospital School in London. At eighteen Samuel entered Cambridge on a scholarship. Later becoming despondent over debts, he left to enlist in the army under an assumed name. His brothers paid for his release, and he returned to the university. He left again without getting a degree, this time to join Robert Southey in a scheme to establish an ideal community in America. The plan collapsed from lack of funds and a change of heart.

Meanwhile Coleridge married Sarah Fricker, whose sister later became Southey's wife. The young couple went to live at Clevedon, where Coleridge, who had not enjoyed any home life since he was nine, was truly happy. Faced with the necessity of earning a living, he tried editing a magazine started with the aid of friends. By the second issue, however, he had alienated nearly all his subscribers, and the magazine soon folded. A friend obtained a cottage for the Coleridges at Nether Stowey, where Coleridge energetically set to work to raise vegetables. When William Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy moved into the neighborhood, the garden was promptly neglected.

Although of contrasting personalities, Coleridge and Wordsworth became close friends and proved a stimulating influence upon each other. It was at this time that Coleridge wrote most of his best poetry, including "The Ancient Mariner," "Christabel" (Part I), "Kubla Khan," "Fears in Solitude," and "France: an Ode." The first three of these poems are marked by the super-realism of the dream world which it was uniquely Coleridge's talent to produce.

Coleridge had taken laudanum in 1796 after the failure of his magazine, and perhaps even earlier. Although "Kubla Khan" was the product of an opium dream, the drug habit had not become overpowering during Coleridge's association with Wordsworth. From 1806 on, however, Coleridge was in the grip of opium. By 1808 he had left his family to the care of Southey, though he continued to make contributions to their support when he occasionally earned money from an article or lecture. In 1816 he put himself under the care of Dr. James Gillman, with whom he lived until his death. With the doctor's assistance he controlled the opium habit but could not break it.





Kubla Khan

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan¹
A stately pleasure dome decree,
Where Alph,² the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.

So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round;
And here were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Unfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momently was forced,
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail;
And mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momently the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,

¹In *Xanadu did Kubla Khan*. Just before falling into the sleep in which the poem came to him, Coleridge had read in *Purchas' Pilgrimage*: "Here the Khan Kubla commanded a palace to be built, and a stately garden thereunto. And thus ten miles of fertile ground were inclosed with a wall." Kubla Khan was a Mongol emperor of the thirteenth century. Xanadu is mentioned only in *Purchas' Pilgrimage*. Kubla's capital city was Cambaluc, now Peiping.

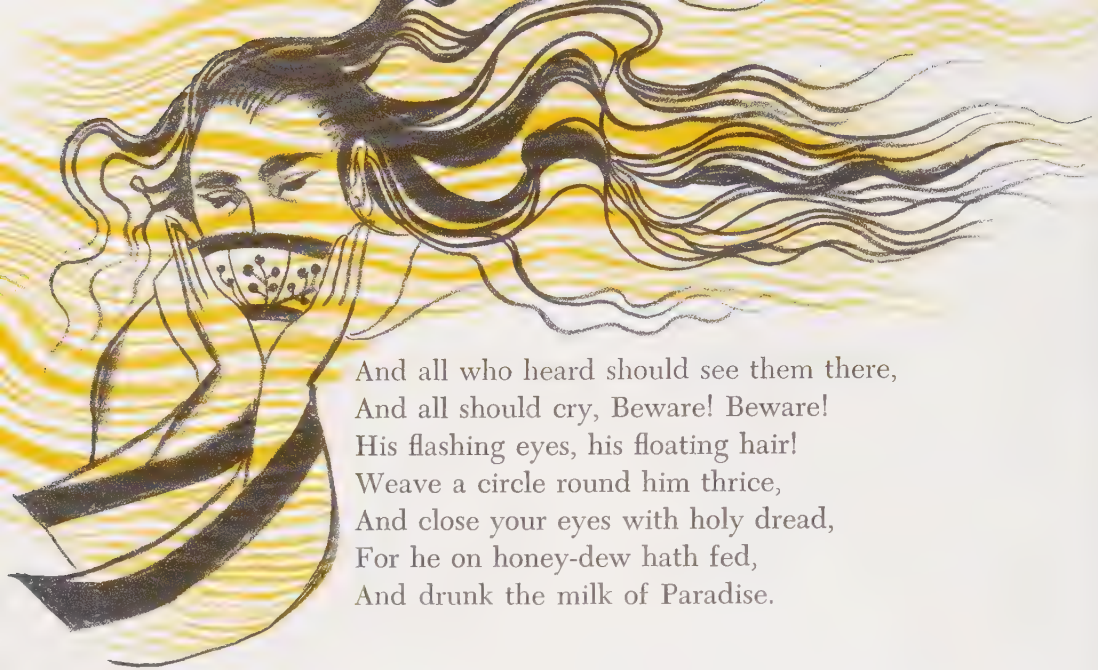
²*Alph*. This river and Mount Abora, mentioned later, are figments of Coleridge's dream.

And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!

A damsel with a dulcimer³
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me,
That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!

³dulcimer. A stringed musical instrument
played with two small hammers.



And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

Discussion

Point out lines in the poem which seem to you to have a strong dreamlike quality.

What seems to be the relationship between the first two stanzas and the last two?

Identify the rhyme scheme and meter of the poem. Point out examples of alliteration, assonance, and repetition.

What purpose is served by a poem like this?

Research

It is remarkable that Coleridge's description of the pleasure dome should suggest definite but different pictures to different readers. If you have any skill in drawing, you will find it a challenge to put your impression on paper.

- 2 If an appreciable number of the class have not previously studied *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, now would be an appropriate time to remedy this deficiency. The poem is divided into seven parts, so as many as seven students might take part in summarizing the poem, each reading aloud at least several stanzas. To make his own portion of the report meaningful each student should, of course, first read the whole poem.

GEORGE GORDON BYRON was born in London, where his mother was staying briefly after having left her husband. His father, Captain John Byron, a handsome but worthless spendthrift, died in France in 1791, and the future poet was brought up by his impoverished and emotionally unstable mother. Byron inherited his father's good looks and his mother's instability, and was born with a club foot which caused him both physical and mental anguish. When he was ten, he inherited his great-uncle's title and estates, including Newstead Abbey, and became the sixth Lord Byron. Funds now available, he was educated at Harrow and at Cambridge University, where he earned the M.A. degree.

Byron served briefly in the House of Lords in 1809, before setting out on a long tour of Europe and the Near East. Following his return to England in 1811 he published *Childe Harold*, Cantos I and II. As readers soon guessed, *Childe Harold* was Byron himself, and he awoke one morning to find himself famous.

On January 2, 1815, he married Anne Isabella Milbanke, a beautiful heiress. Within a year they separated, for unstated reasons, and public opinion turned against the late hero.

Ostracized but hardly repentant, Byron left England in 1816. On his way to join the Shelleys in Switzerland, he visited the battlefield of Waterloo and wrote the stanzas later included in Canto III of *Childe Harold*. After some months with the Shelleys, Byron continued on to Venice, where he made his home for several years and where he wrote Canto IV of *Childe Harold*. Here, too, in 1818 he began his greatest poem, *Don Juan*, a satire on life, which was published in several parts but never completed.

Feeling his exile more than he wanted to admit, Byron scandalized Venice with his wild living. His loneliness resulted, too, in many letters to friends, and these alone would have entitled him to a place in English literature.

In 1823, urged by the London Committee for Greek Independence, Byron outfitted a 120-ton brig and sailed for Greece. Even though he knew he was entering a fever trap, Byron joined the Greek revolutionaries at Missolonghi, where during the next three months his personality and organizing ability had an almost magical effect on the disheartened Greeks, whose struggle for independence from Turkey was at low ebb. As he had expected, Byron contracted fever. He died in January, 1824, three months after his thirty-sixth birthday.

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON





She Walks in Beauty

She¹ walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impaired the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear, their dwelling place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!

¹*She.* Lady Wilmot Horton, Byron's cousin by marriage. Byron had seen her at a ball, wearing a black dress with spangles on it.

Discussion

1. What is the figure of speech in the first two lines? What part of the world do you think is suggested here?
2. In what way does Byron make a symbol of the lady's dress?
3. What two interpretations can you give the word "beauty" in this poem? Which does Byron emphasize?
4. Do you think people's faces reveal their character? Point out lines which reveal Byron's opinion on this question.
5. Just what is it that makes this such an appealing poem?

Research

This poem is one of a group of twenty-three called *Hebrew Melodies*, written by Byron at the request of a friend, and published with music in 1815. If some musically talented member of the class were to find the music and sing one or more songs, it would be a fine contribution to class appreciation.

So We'll Go No More A-Roving

So we'll go no more a-rov-ing
 So late into the night,
 Though the heart be still as lov-ing,
 And the moon be still as bright.

For the sword outwears its sheath,
 And the soul wears out the breast,
 And the heart must pause to breathe,
 And love itself have rest.

Though the night was made for lov-ing,
 And the day returns too soon,
 Yet we'll go no more a-rov-ing
 By the light of the moon.



Discussion

1. Byron had been attending a week-long carnival in Venice when he wrote this poem. What light does this throw on the poem?
2. What is the mood of the poem? Do you think it was a temporary or a lasting mood?
3. What reason does Byron give for going "no more a-rov-ing"?
4. What is the symbolism in "For the sword outwears its sheath"?
5. Critics have compared the broken rhythm of the last line to "a sob in the throat." What justification for this opinion can you think of?



Childe Harold's Pilgrimage

WATERLOO. FROM CANTO III

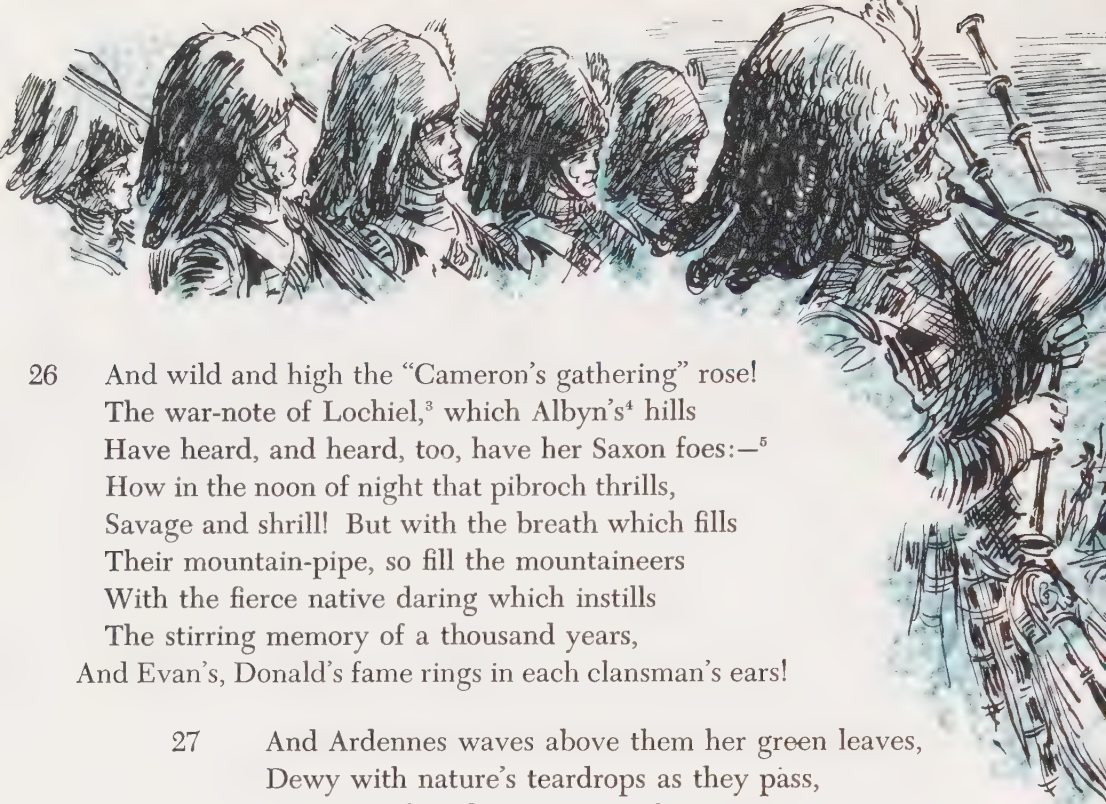
- 21 There was a sound of revelry by night,¹
And Belgium's capital had gathered then
Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men;
A thousand hearts beat happily; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes looked love to eyes which spake again,
And all went merry as a marriage bell;
But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell!
- 22 Did ye not hear it?—No; 'twas but the wind,
Or the car rattling o'er the stony street;
On with the dance! let joy be unconfined;
No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet
To chase the glowing Hours with flying feet—
But hark!—that heavy sound breaks in once more,
As if the clouds its echo would repeat;
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before!
Arm! Arm! it is—it is—the cannon's opening roar!

¹*revelry by night.* The Duchess of Richmond gave a ball for her daughter on June 15, 1815, the night before the Battle of Quatre Bras, which was a sort of prelude to the Battle of Waterloo on the 18th.

- 23 Within a windowed niche of that high hall
 Sat Brunswick's fated chieftain;² he did hear
 That sound the first amidst the festival,
 And caught its tone with Death's prophetic ear;
 And when they smiled because he deemed it near,
 His heart more truly knew that peal too well
 Which stretched his father on a bloody bier,
 And roused the vengeance blood alone could quell;
 He rushed into the field, and, foremost fighting, fell.
- 24 Ah! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
 And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress,
 And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago
 Blushed at the praise of their own loveliness;
 And there were sudden partings, such as press
 The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs
 Which ne'er might be repeated; who could guess
 If ever more should meet those mutual eyes,
 Since upon night so sweet such awful morn could rise!
- 25 And there was mounting in hot haste: the steed,
 The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,
 Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
 And swiftly forming in the ranks of war;
 And the deep thunder peal on peal afar;
 And near, the beat of the alarming drum
 Roused up the soldier ere the morning star;
 While thronged the citizens with terror dumb,
 Or whispering, with white lips—"The foe, they come! they come!"

²*Brunswick's fated chieftain.* The Duke of Brunswick was fated to die early the next day. Like his father, who had been fatally wounded at the Battle of Auerstadt in 1806, the Duke had bitterly opposed Napoleon's occupation of Germany.





26 And wild and high the “Cameron’s gathering” rose!
The war-note of Lochiel,³ which Albyn’s⁴ hills
Have heard, and heard, too, have her Saxon foes:—⁵
How in the noon of night that pibroch thrills,
Savage and shrill! But with the breath which fills
Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountaineers
With the fierce native daring which instills
The stirring memory of a thousand years,
And Evan’s, Donald’s fame rings in each clansman’s ears!

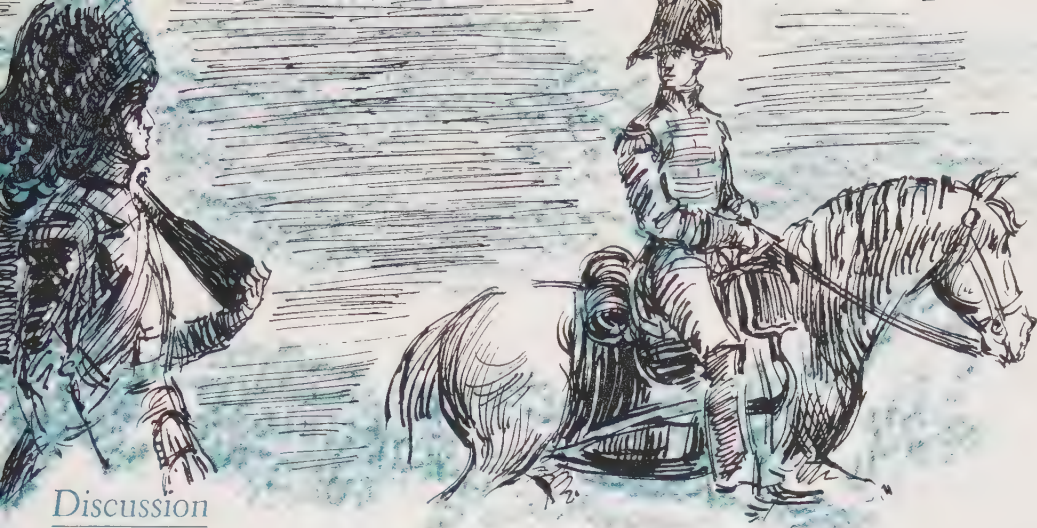
27 And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves,
Dewy with nature’s teardrops as they pass,
Grieving, if aught inanimate e’er grieves,
Over the unreturning brave—alas!
Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
Which now beneath them, but above shall grow
In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
Of living valor, rolling on the foe
And burning with high hope, shall molder cold and low.

28 Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
Last eve in Beauty’s circle proudly gay,
The midnight brought the signal-sound of strife,
The morn the marshaling in arms—the day
Battle’s magnificently stern array!
The thunder-clouds close o’er it, which when rent
The earth is covered thick with other clay,
Which her own clay shall cover, heaped and pent,
Rider and horse—friend, foe—in one red burial blent!

³*Lochiel.* Donald Cameron of Lochiel was chief of the Cameron clan.

⁴*Albyn.* Ancient name for Scotland.

⁵*Saxon foes.* The English. Donald’s grandfather Evan fought against Cromwell.



Discussion

1. Contrast the first and last lines of the selection. How, briefly, has Byron made this transition?
2. Where in the poem do we hear the first ominous sound? Where is the sound first identified?
3. How does Byron maintain suspense?
4. There is an often-quoted line in Stanza 22. Which one do you think it is?
5. Why were the citizens of Brussels standing around in “terror dumb”?
6. How does Byron tell us that war involves death? Find as many places in the poem as you can where Byron makes this point.
7. Identify the meter and rhyme-scheme of the poem. What do these contribute to the emotion of the poem? Point out some good examples of onomatopoeia?

Research

1. Byron was the first writer to make use of the dramatic contrast between ball and battle that Waterloo provided. Many were later to use the same situation, among them the novelist Thackeray, who describes the ball in Chapter 29 of *Vanity Fair*. You might read this chapter and summarize it briefly for your classmates.
2. The American Carl Sandburg has written a little poem called “Grass” which might well have been suggested by Byron’s poem. Look up Sandburg’s poem and then find the line of Byron’s which expresses the same thought.



On This Day I Complete My Thirty-sixth Year

'Tis time this heart should be unmoved,
Since others it hath ceased to move;
Yet, though I cannot be beloved,
Still let me love!

My days are in the yellow leaf;
The flowers and fruits of love are gone;
The worm, the canker, and the grief
Are mine alone!

The fire that on my bosom preys
Is lone as some volcanic isle;
No torch is kindled at its blaze—
A funeral pile.

The hope, the fear, the jealous care,
The exalted portion of the pain
And power of love, I cannot share,
But wear the chain.

But 'tis not *thus*—and 'tis not *here*—
Such thoughts should shake my soul, nor *now*,
Where glory decks the hero's bier,
Or binds his brow.

The sword, the banner, and the field,
Glory and Greece, around me see!
The Spartan, borne upon his shield,¹
Was not more free.

¹*upon his shield.* The Spartan soldier carried a large rectangular shield which could also serve as a stretcher. It was a Spartan mother who said to her son as she handed him his shield, "Come back with it, or on it."

Awake! (not Greece—she *is* awake!)
Awake, my spirit! Think through *whom*
Thy life-blood tracks its parent lake,²
And then strike home!

Tread those reviving passions down,
Unworthy manhood!—unto thee
Indifferent should the smile or frown
Of beauty be.

If thou regrett'st thy youth, *why live?*
The land of honorable death
Is here:—up to the field, and give
Away thy breath!

Seek out—less often sought than found—
A soldier's grave, for thee the best;
Then look around, and choose thy ground,
And take thy rest.



²*its parent lake.* One of Byron's ancestors had come to England with William the Conqueror, and through his mother he was descended from James I.

Discussion

1. Do you think it is possible to love without being loved? What is Byron's opinion?
2. Name and analyze the figure of speech in Stanza 2.
3. Which stanza do you think is the saddest in the poem? Support your choice with a brief discussion.
 - Point out passages which reveal Byron's nobility of spirit.
 - What is Byron's wish in the last stanza? To what extent was it gratified?
 - Compare this poem with Milton's sonnet on his twenty-third birthday (page 382).



JOHN KEATS was born in London, where his father kept a livery-stable. The Keats were ambitious for their four children and saw that they were well educated. About the time John completed his schooling, both his parents died, and his guardian apprenticed him to a surgeon. Although he had begun to write poetry, he studied diligently and passed his examinations to become a licensed pharmacist.

Leigh Hunt, the essayist, encouraged Keats in his literary attempts, and by 1817 Keats was definitely committed to a career as a poet. His long poem *Endymion* was published in 1818 and was given rather cruel reviews. The same year Keats fell in love with Fanny Brawne. She was not the object of his "unreflecting love" in "When I Have Fears That I May Cease to Be." When he wrote that sonnet he had not yet met her, and his love for Fanny was hardly unreflecting, or he might have married her in spite of obstacles.


A younger brother, Tom, was dying of tuberculosis, and John nursed him from August till December, when he died. Much as John loved Fanny, he felt he had no right to marry her. Fanny was well-off, but Keats was fiercely independent and would not marry until he could support a wife. His health was beginning to deteriorate, though he thought of his ailment as merely a sore throat.

In spite of all his troubles, between January and May, 1819, Keats wrote "The Eve of St. Agnes," "The Eve of St. Mark," "Bright Star, Would I Were as Steadfast as Thou Art," "La Belle Dame sans Merci," and the odes "To Psyche," "On a Grecian Urn," "On Melancholy," "To a Nightingale," and "On Indolence." Although Keats didn't realize it, his immortality was secure.

During the night of February 3, 1820, Keats coughed blood for the first time. To his friend Charles Armitage Brown, with whom he shared half a house, he said, "Bring me the candle, Brown, and let me see this blood." He saw at once that it was arterial blood and said, "That drop of blood is my death-warrant." He fought the disease for a year. In September he and his friend Joseph Severn sailed for Italy, as his last hope. At first Keats seemed to improve, but it was too late. He died in Rome, February 23, 1821, and was buried in the Protestant cemetery there.

In spite of his short life, Keats stands in the first rank of English poets. His poems are particularly noted for their youthful enthusiasm, their melodic quality, their wealth of sense impressions, and an imaginative use of symbolism.

JOHN KEATS 1785-1821



When I Have Fears That I May Cease to Be

When I have fears that I may cease to be
Before my pen has gleaned my teeming brain,
Before high-pilèd books, in character¹,
Hold like rich garner²s the full ripened grain;
When I behold, upon the night's starred face,
Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance,
And think that I may never live to trace
Their shadows, with the magic hand of chance;
And when I feel, fair creature of an hour,
That I shall never look upon thee more,
Never have relish in the fairy power
Of unreflecting love--then on the shore
Of the wide world I stand alone, and think
Till love and fame to nothingness do sink.

¹*in character*. Put into print.

²*garner*. Granary.

Discussion

1. Point out all the lines in which Keats refers to death.
2. What ambition does Keats reveal in this poem?
3. What is "unreflecting love"? What is its chief charm?
4. What does the last line mean?
5. Is this sonnet Petrarchan or Shakespearean?

Ode on a Grecian Urn

Thou still unravished bride of quietness,
Thou foster child of silence and slow time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape
Of deities or mortals, or of both,
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
What men or gods are these? What maidens loath?
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endeared,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone.
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
Forever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unwearied,
Forever piping songs forever new;
More happy love! more happy, happy love!
Forever warm and still to be enjoyed,
Forever panting, and forever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloyed,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.



Who are these coming to the sacrifice?

To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands dressed?
What little town by river or sea shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede¹
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity. Cold Pastoral!²
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
"Beauty is truth, truth beauty"—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

¹*brede*. embroidery.

²*Cold Pastoral*. A pastoral is a poem describing country life in romantic terms. It is cold in this case because it is expressed in marble.

Discussion

1. Explain how the first two lines apply to the urn.
2. Describe the scene in the second and third stanzas.
3. What does Keats mean by "Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard are sweeter"?
4. Describe the scene on the other side of the urn (Stanza 4).
5. What advantages over living people are attributed to the figures on the vase? What does this reveal about Keats?
6. What relationship has the last stanza to the earlier ones?
7. What do the last two lines mean? Why are they so famous?





THE SON of a conservative, well-to-do country gentleman, Percy Bysshe Shelley was born on his father's estate in Sussex, where he early showed signs of his lifelong delight in the out-of-doors. After less than a year at Oxford University he was expelled for writing a pamphlet titled *The Necessity of Atheism*. It is likely he wrote the pamphlet more from a desire to shock than from any strong convictions on the subject.

At nineteen, Shelley married sixteen-year-old Harriet Westbrook, partly because he thought he was in love with her, partly to rescue her from the "tyranny" of her parents. The young couple lived for a time in Ireland, where Shelley took an active interest in the Irish struggle for independence. Back in London, Shelley met and fell in love with the brilliant and well-educated Mary Godwin. At the end of July Shelley abandoned his wife and eloped to Switzerland with Mary. Upon their return to London they lived in poverty for about a year, when the death of Shelley's grandfather gave him an income of a thousand pounds a year.

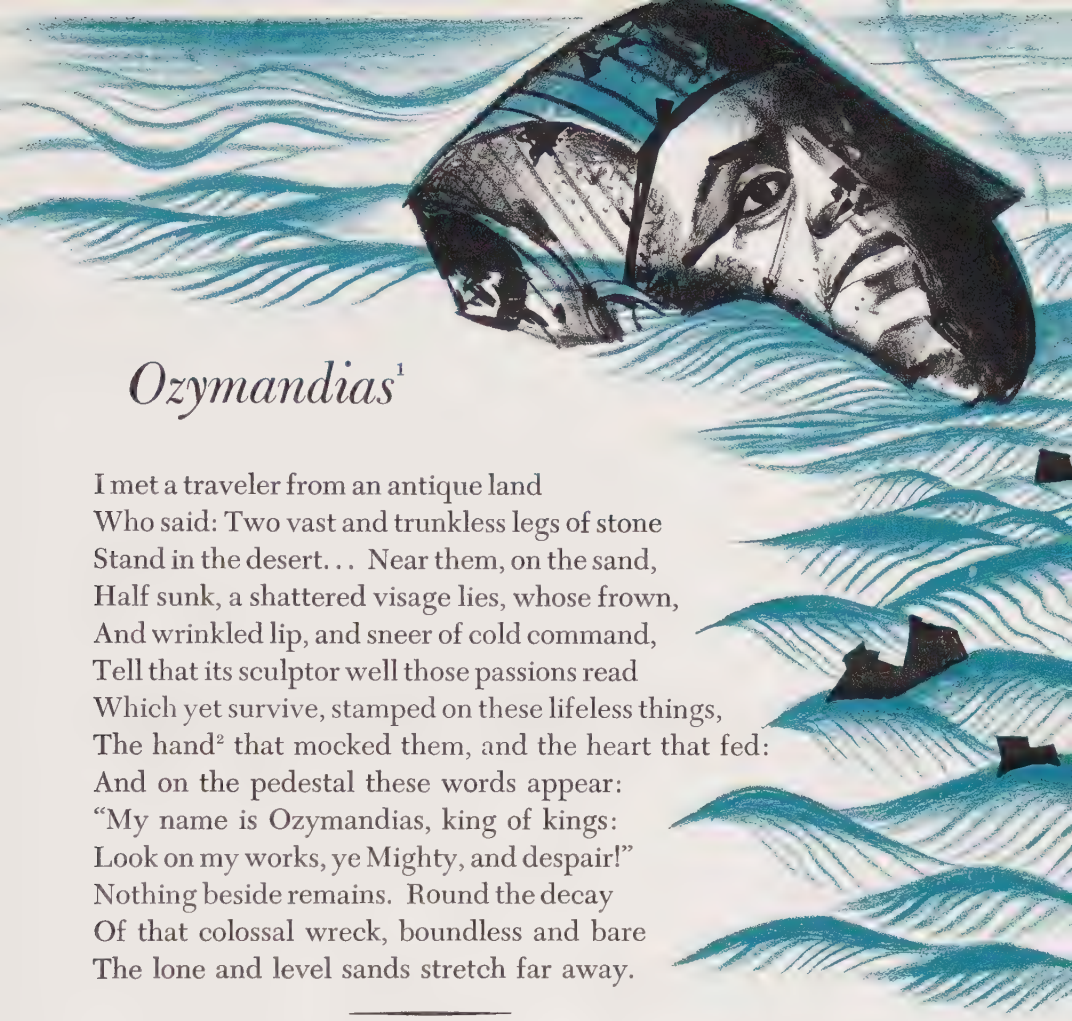
Shelley and Mary Godwin spent the summer of 1816 in Geneva, Switzerland, where Byron joined them. It was here, at Byron's suggestion, that Mary wrote *Frankenstein*. That fall Harriet drowned herself. Shelley went to court to gain custody of their two children but lost the case.

In 1818 the Shelleys, now married, went to Italy to escape the criticism poured upon them in England. After moving about Italy for several years the Shelleys settled in Pisa. It was here in the woods along the Arno River that "Ode to the West Wind" was written. In 1822 the Shelleys and Jane and Edward Williams rented a house together on the Gulf of Spezia. In July the two men sailed their small yacht to Leghorn to see Leigh Hunt. On the return trip, July 8, the yacht sank in a sudden storm and both men were drowned. Shelley's body washed ashore ten days later and, in accordance with Italian law, was buried on the beach in quicklime. On August 16 the body was exhumed and cremated. The ashes were buried in the Protestant cemetery in Rome, not far from the grave of Keats.

Shelley is one of the great lyric poets of English literature. Generally considered among his best poems are "Ozymandias," "Ode to the West Wind," "The Cloud," and "To a Skylark." The last three named are filled with the personifications and "dream-world" imagery that are uniquely Shelley's contribution to English poetry.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

1792-1822



Ozymandias¹

I met a traveler from an antique land
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. . . Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand² that mocked them, and the heart that fed:
And on the pedestal these words appear:
“My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!”
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

¹*Ozymandias*. The Greek name for Ramses II, ruler of Egypt in the thirteenth century B.C. The statue described here is probably one of those at Thebes.

²*the hand*. That of the sculptor. As used here *mocked* means *imitated*.

Discussion

1. What does the face of the shattered statue reveal about the long dead king?
2. What was the challenge inscribed on the pedestal? What “Mighty” force accepted the challenge?
3. Wherein lies the irony of the poem?
4. What modern parallels does the poem suggest?
5. What is the rhyme-scheme of the poem? How does it differ from the usual sonnet pattern? (See page 356.)



Ode to the West Wind

I

O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O thou,
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold and low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the spring shall blow

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
With living hues and odors plain and hill;

Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;
Destroyer and preserver; hear, O hear!

II

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep sky's commotion,
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven and Ocean,

Angels of rain and lightning; there are spread
On the blue surface of thine airy surge,
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head

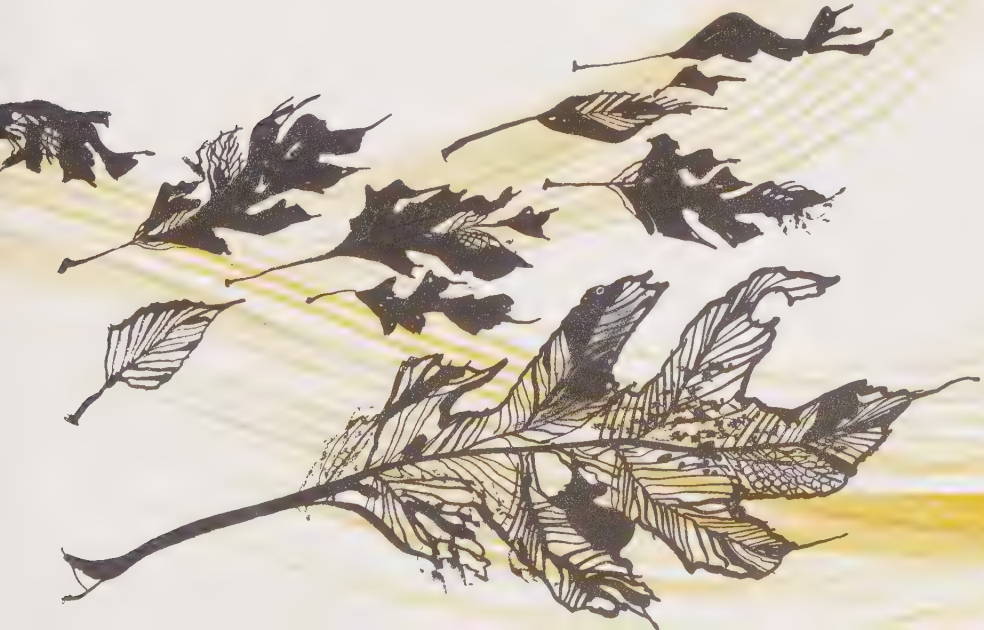
Of some fierce Maenad,¹ even from the dim verge
Of the horizon to the zenith's height,
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge

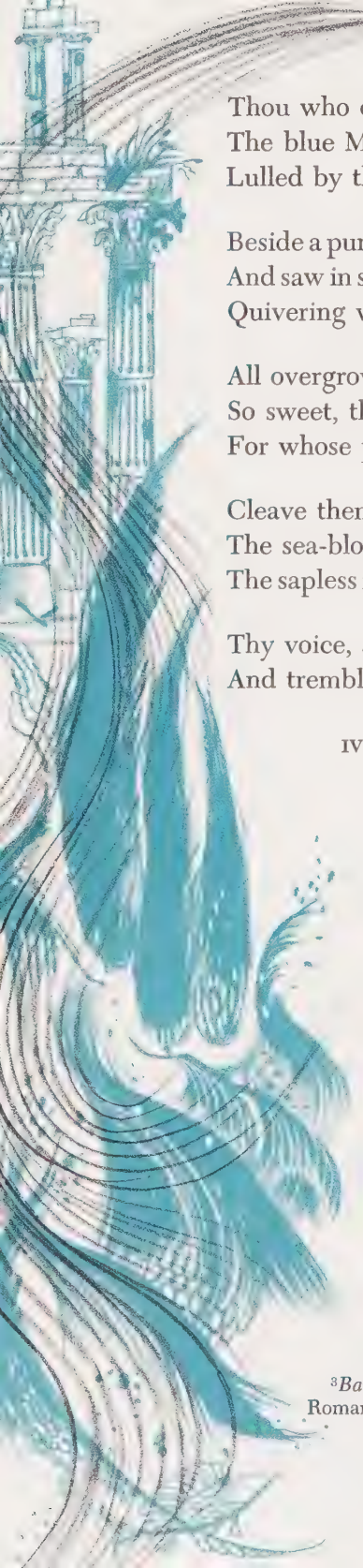
Of the dying year, to which this closing night²
Will be the dome of a vast sepulcher,
Vaulted with all thy congregated might

Of vapors from whose solid atmosphere
Black rain, and fire, and hail will burst; O hear!

¹*Maenad*. According to Greek mythology the maenads were female attendants of Dionysus, the god of wine.

²*closing night*. Night is closing in.





Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
Lulled by the coil of his crystalline streams,

Beside a pumice isle in Baiae's bay,³
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,

All overgrown with azure moss and flowers
So sweet, the sense faints picturing them! Thou
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers

Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean, know

Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with fear,
And tremble and despoil themselves: O hear!

iv If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share

The impulse of thy strength, only less free
Than thou, O uncontrollable! If even
I were as in my boyhood, and could be

The comrade of thy wanderings over heaven,
As then, when to outstrip thy skyey speed
Scarce seemed a vision; I would ne'er have striven

As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
Oh, lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!

A heavy weight of hours has claimed and bowed
One too like thee: tameless, and swift, and proud.

³*Baiae's bay.* A bay on the Bay of Naples. Many wealthy Romans, including Julius Caesar, built luxurious villas here.

- v Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is:
 What if my leaves are falling like its own!
 The tumult of thy mighty harmonies

Will take from both a deep, autumnal tone,
 Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, spirit fierce,
 My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe
 Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth!
 And, by the incantation of this verse,

Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth,
 Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!
 Be through my lips to unawakened earth

The trumpet of a prophecy! O Wind,
 If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

Discussion

1. What figure of speech is carried through the whole poem?
2. Shelley has conveniently divided his poem into units of thought. What different activities of the wind are treated in each of the first three stanzas?
3. What is the relationship of the wind to the poet in Stanza IV?
4. What autobiographical interpretation can you give the line, "I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!"?
5. In what sense is Stanza V the climax of the poem? Point out passages which express Shelley's idealism.
6. What do the last two lines mean? Why do you think the last line is so often quoted, even by people who don't know its source?

Research

For an interesting biography of Shelley look up André Maurois' *Ariel*. The book is brief but fascinating. Don't try to report on the whole book, but select an incident or two that seem to illuminate Shelley's poetry.



Love's Philosophy

I

The fountains mingle with the river
And the rivers with the Ocean,
The winds of Heaven mix for ever
With a sweet emotion;
Nothing in the world is single;
All things by a law divine
In one spirit meet and mingle.
Why not I with thine?—

II

See the mountains kiss high Heaven
And the waves clasp one another;
No sister-flower would be forgiven
If it disdained its brother;
And the sunlight clasps the earth
And the moonbeams kiss the sea:
What is all this sweet work worth
If thou kiss not me?

Discussion

1. What is the philosophy of love expressed in this poem? Which line best summarizes it?
2. Do you feel “let down” by the last two lines? Why? How has Shelley built up his case?
3. In what sense is the whole poem an example of hyperbole?

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON 1809–1892



ALFRED TENNYSON was the son of an Episcopalian clergyman. The fourth of twelve children, he was born in Somersby, in Lincolnshire. Like his older brothers, Alfred was educated at home until it was time to enter Cambridge University, which he and his brother Charles did together in 1828. The year before, a local bookseller had published a volume of poems by Alfred and Charles titled *Poems by Two Brothers*. At Cambridge Alfred's most fruitful experience was his friendship with Arthur Hallam.

The senior Tennyson died in 1831, and Alfred took over the responsibility of the family finances. He left Cambridge without a degree and spent the next six years looking after his mother and writing poetry. A volume of poems published in 1832 was harshly criticized; and Tennyson did not publish again for ten years. An even harder blow than the reception of his poems was the sudden death of his friend Hallam.

When Tennyson rather hesitantly published two volumes of *Poems* in 1842, he was hailed as a great poet and was rewarded with a government pension. Besides revisions of earlier poems, the new volumes included "Locksley Hall," "Ulysses," "Morte d'Arthur," and "Break, Break, Break." The last named poem was Tennyson's first poetic expression of grief at Hallam's death. He later said the poem was "made in a Lincolnshire lane at five o'clock in the morning between blossoming hedges." His thoughts, however, were on the seashore, perhaps at Clevedon Church, where Hallam was buried on a hill overlooking Bristol Channel. "Locksley Hall" was a spirited young man's attack on a society which placed rank and money above character.

In 1850 Tennyson published *In Memoriam*, a series of elegies in which he paid tribute to Hallam and also revealed his own search for meaning in life. The poem rendered a service to religion by reconciling the conflict many Victorians saw between science and faith. The volume proved popular and perhaps had some bearing on Tennyson's appointment as Poet Laureate. Now financially able to conclude his twenty-year courtship of Emily Sellwood, Tennyson proposed marriage and was accepted.

Tennyson was a master of poetic technique. He wrote on a wide variety of subjects and excelled in many types of poetry. A distinguishing characteristic of his poetry is a unifying sense of law and order. Even his enthusiasm for science was due to the fact that Victorian scientists were finding laws in nature.

Tennyson was created the first Baron Tennyson in 1884. After twice refusing the honor, he accepted it as a tribute to Literature rather than to himself. When he was eighty-one Tennyson wrote "Crossing the Bar," surely as serene an approach to death as any man has uttered. By his request to his son Hallam the poem has been placed last in all editions of Tennyson's poems. When Tennyson died in 1892, he was buried near Chaucer in Westminster Abbey.



Locksley Hall



Comrades, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis early morn;
Leave me here, and when you want me, sound upon the bugle horn.

'Tis the place, and all around it, as of old, the curlews call,
Dreary gleams about the moorland flying over Locksley Hall;

Locksley Hall, that in the distance overlooks the sandy tracts,
And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring into cataracts.

Many a night from yonder ivied casement, ere I went to rest,
Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly to the west.

Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising through the mellow shade,
Glitter like a swarm of fireflies tangled in a silver braid.

Here about the beach I wander'd, nourishing a youth sublime
With the fairy tales of science, and the long result of time;

When the centuries behind me like a fruitful land reposed;
When I clung to all the present for the promise that it closed;¹

¹*closed.* Enclosed.

When I dipped into the future far as human eye could see,
Saw the vision of the world and all the wonder that would be.—

In the spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's breast;
In the spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another crest;

In the spring a livelier iris changes on the burnished dove;
In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love.

Then her cheek was pale and thinner than should be for one so young,
And her eyes on all my motions with a mute observance hung.

And I said, "My cousin Amy, speak, and speak the truth to me,
Trust me, cousin, all the current of my being sets to thee."

On her pallid cheek and forehead came a color and a light,
As I have seen the rosy red flushing in the northern night.

And she turned—her bosom shaken with a sudden storm of sighs—
All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark of hazel eyes—

Saying, "I have hid my feelings, fearing they should do me wrong";
Saying, "Dost thou love me, cousin?" weeping, "I have loved thee long."

Love took up the glass of Time,² and turned it in his glowing hands;
Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden sands.

Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might;
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, passed in music out of sight.

Many a morning on the moorland did we hear the copses ring,
And her whisper thronged my pulses with the fullness of the spring.

Many an evening by the waters did we watch the stately ships,
And our spirits rushed together at the touching of the lips.

O my cousin, shallow-hearted! O my Amy, mine no more!
O the dreary, dreary moorland! O the barren, barren shore!

²*glass of Time.* An hourglass.

Falser than all fancy fathoms, falser than all songs have sung,
Puppet to a father's threat, and servile to a shrewish tongue!

Is it well to wish thee happy?—having known me—to decline
On a range of lower feelings and a narrower heart than mine!

Yet it shall be; thou shalt lower to his level day by day,
What is fine within thee growing coarse to sympathize with clay.

As the husband is, the wife is; thou art mated with a clown,
And the grossness of his nature will have weight to drag thee down.

He will hold thee, when his passion shall have spent its novel force,
Something better than his dog, a little dearer than his horse.

What is this? His eyes are heavy; think not they are glazed with wine.
Go to him, it is thy duty; kiss him, take his hand in thine.

It may be my lord is weary, that his brain is overwrought;
Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch him with thy lighter thought.

He will answer to the purpose, easy things to understand—
Better thou were dead before me, though I slew thee with my hand!

Better thou and I were lying, hidden from the heart's disgrace,
Rolled in one another's arms, and silent in a last embrace.

Cursed be the social wants that sin against the strength of youth!
Cursed be the social lies that warp us from the living truth!

Cursed be the sickly forms that err from honest nature's rule!
Cursed be the gold that gilds the straightened forehead of the fool!

Well—'tis well that I should bluster!—Hadst thou less unworthy proved—
Would to God—for I had loved thee more than ever wife was loved.

Am I mad that I should cherish that which bears but bitter fruit?
I will pluck it from my bosom, though my heart be at the root.

Never, though my mortal summers to such length of years should come
As the many-wintered crow that leads the clanging rookery home.

Where is comfort? In division of the records of the mind?
Can I part her from herself, and love her, as I knew her, kind?

I remember one that perished;³ sweetly did she speak and move;
Such a one do I remember, whom to look at was to love.

Can I think of her as dead, and love her for the love she bore?
No—she never loved me truly; love is love forevermore.

Comfort? Comfort scorned of devils! This is truth the poet⁴ sings,
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things.

Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it, lest thy heart be put to proof,
In the dead unhappy night, and when the rain is on the roof.

Like a dog, he⁵ hunts in dreams, and thou art staring at the wall,
Where the dying night-lamp flickers, and the shadows rise and fall.

Then a hand shall pass before thee, pointing to his drunken sleep,
To the widowed marriage-pillows, to the tears that thou wilt weep.

Thou shalt hear the "Never, never," whispered by the phantom years,
And a song from out the distance in the ringing of thine ears;

And an eye shall vex thee, looking ancient kindness on thy pain.
Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow; get thee to thy rest again.

Nay, but Nature brings thee solace; for a tender voice will cry.
'Tis a purer life than thine, a lip to drain thy trouble dry.

Baby lips will laugh me down; my latest rival brings thee rest.
Baby fingers, waxen touches, press me from the mother's breast.

Oh, the child, too, clothes the father with a dearness not his due.
Half is thine and half is his; it will be worthy of the two.

³*perished.* The meaning is that Amy no longer exists as the poet remembers her.

⁴*the poet.* Dante, who wrote in his *Inferno*, "There is no greater sorrow than to remember happy times when one is in misery."

⁵*he.* Amy's husband.

Oh, I see thee old and formal, fitted to thy petty part,
With a little hoard of maxims preaching down a daughter's heart.

"They were dangerous guides, the feelings—she herself was not exempt—
Truly, she herself had suffered"—Perish in thy self-contempt!

Overlive it—lower yet—be happy! Wherefore should I care?
I myself must mix with action, lest I wither by despair.

What is that which I should turn to, lighting upon days like these?
Every door is barred with gold, and opens but to golden keys.

Every gate is thronged with suitors, all the markets overflow.
I have but an angry fancy; what is that which I should do?

I had been content to perish, falling on the foeman's ground,
When the ranks are rolled in vapor, and the winds are laid with sound.

But the jingling of the guinea helps the hurt that Honor feels,
And the nations do but murmur, snarling at each other's heels.

Can I but relive in sadness? I will turn that earlier page.
Hide me from my deep emotion, O thou wondrous Mother-Age!

Make me feel the wild pulsation that I felt before the strife,
When I heard my days before me, and the tumult of my life;

Yearning for the large excitement that the coming years would yield,
Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves his father's field,

And at night along the dusky highway, near and nearer drawn,
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring like a dreary dawn;

And his spirit leaps within him to be gone before him then,
Underneath the light he looks at, in among the throngs of men;

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something new;
That which they have done but earnest of the things that they shall do.

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be;

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rained a ghastly dew
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue;

Far along the world-wide whisper of the south wind rushing warm,
With the standards of the peoples plunging through the thunderstorm;

Till the war drum throbbed no longer, and the battle flags were furled
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapped in universal law.

So I triumphed ere my passion sweeping through me left me dry,
Left me with the palsied heart, and left me with the jaundiced eye;

Eye, to which all order festers, all things here are out of joint.
Science moves, but slowly, slowly, creeping on from point to point;

Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion, creeping nigher,
Glares at one that nods and winks behind a slowly-dying fire.

Yet I doubt not thro' the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widen'd with the process of the suns.

What is that to him that reaps not harvest of his youthful joys,
Though the deep heart of existence beat forever like a boy's?

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I linger on the shore,
And the individual withers, and the world is more and more.

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and he bears a laden breast,
Full of sad experience, moving toward the stillness of his rest.

Hark, my merry comrades call me, sounding on the bugle horn,
They to whom my foolish passion were a target for their scorn.

Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on such a moulder'd string?
I am shamed through all my nature to have loved so slight a thing.



Weakness to be wroth with weakness! Woman's pleasure, woman's pain—
Nature made them blinder motions⁶ bounded in a shallower brain.

Woman is the lesser man, and all thy passions, matched with mine,
Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine—

Here at least, where nature sickens, nothing. Ah, for some retreat
Deep in yonder shining Orient, where my life began to beat,

Where in wild Mahratta-battle⁷ fell my father evil-starred;
I was left a trampled orphan, and a selfish uncle's ward.

Or to burst all links of habit—there to wander far away,
On from island unto island at the gateways of the day.

Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,
Breadths of tropic shade and palms in cluster, knots of Paradise.

Never comes the trader, never floats an European flag,
Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland, swings the trailer from the crag;

Droops the heavy-blossomed bower, hangs the heavy-fruited tree—
Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-purple spheres of sea.

⁶*motions*. Probably impulses.

⁷*Mahratta-battle*. The British were often at war with the Mahrattas in India.

There methinks would be enjoyment more than in this march of mind,
In the steamship, in the railway, in the thoughts that shake mankind.

There the passions cramped no longer shall have scope and breathing space;
I will take some savage woman, she shall rear my dusky race.

Iron-jointed, supple-sinewed, they shall dive, and they shall run,
Catch the wild goat by the hair, and hurl their lances in the sun;

Whistle back the parrot's call, and leap the rainbows of the brooks,
Not with blinded eyesight poring over miserable books—

Fool, again the dream, the fancy! But I *know* my words are wild,
But I count the gray barbarian lower than the Christian child.

I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of our glorious gains,
Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a beast with lower pains!

Mated with a squalid savage—what to me were sun or clime!
I the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files of time—

I that rather held it better men should perish one by one,
Than that earth should stand at gaze like Joshua's moon⁸ in Ajalon!

Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us range,
Let the great world spin forever down the ringing grooves of change.⁹

Through the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day;
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.

Mother-Age—for mine I knew not—help me as when life begun;
Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash the lightnings, weigh the sun.¹⁰

Oh, I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath not set.
Ancient founts of inspiration well through all my fancy yet.

⁸*Joshua's moon.* In Joshua 10:12-13 Joshua commanded the sun and the moon to stand still.

⁹*ringing grooves of change.* Written during Tennyson's first train ride. It was at night, and he was under the mistaken impression that the train's wheels ran in grooves.

¹⁰*weigh the sun.* Tennyson was fascinated by Francis Baily's experiments in determining the density of the earth and the weight of the sun.

Howsoever these things be, a long farewell to Locksley Hall!
Now for me the woods may wither, now for me the roof-tree fall.

Comes a vapor from the margin, blackening over heath and holt,
Cramming all the blast before it, in its breast a thunderbolt.

Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or hail, or fire or snow;
For the mighty wind arises, roaring seaward, and I go.

Discussion

1. What makes this poem a dramatic monologue? State briefly the biographical facts the poem reveals about the speaker.
2. What experience has embittered the young man? Point out lines which show his disgust with women; his smugness.
3. Why is the line about “a young man’s fancy” so often quoted? What parodies of it have you heard?
4. What are the four curses? Express each in terms of life today.
5. What did the poet see when he “dip into the future”? In what ways have these prophecies been fulfilled?
6. How do you interpret the line “Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers”?
7. What meaning do you find in the line, “the individual withers, and the world is more and more”? What increasing significance is attached to this line today?
8. Point out the note of optimism near the end of the poem.
9. Identify the meter and verse form of the poem.

Research

1. You may find it interesting to read “Locksley Hall Sixty Years After” and compare it to the poem you have just read. What is the “plot” of the later poem? What now embitters the speaker?
2. Select and memorize a dozen or more lines from the poem. Be prepared to explain the significance to you of the lines chosen.
3. Find lines to support the assumption that Tennyson approved the viewpoint Wordsworth expressed in his sonnet “The World Is Too Much with Us,” page 454.



Break, Break, Break

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

Oh, well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play!
Oh, well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill;
But oh, for the touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.

Discussion

1. What mood is created by the first two lines?
2. Considering the poem as a whole, what purpose is served by the second stanza?
3. What do the last two lines mean?
4. Which lines seem particularly poignant?
5. Identify the several meters of the poem. How do they reinforce the thought?

Crossing the Bar

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,

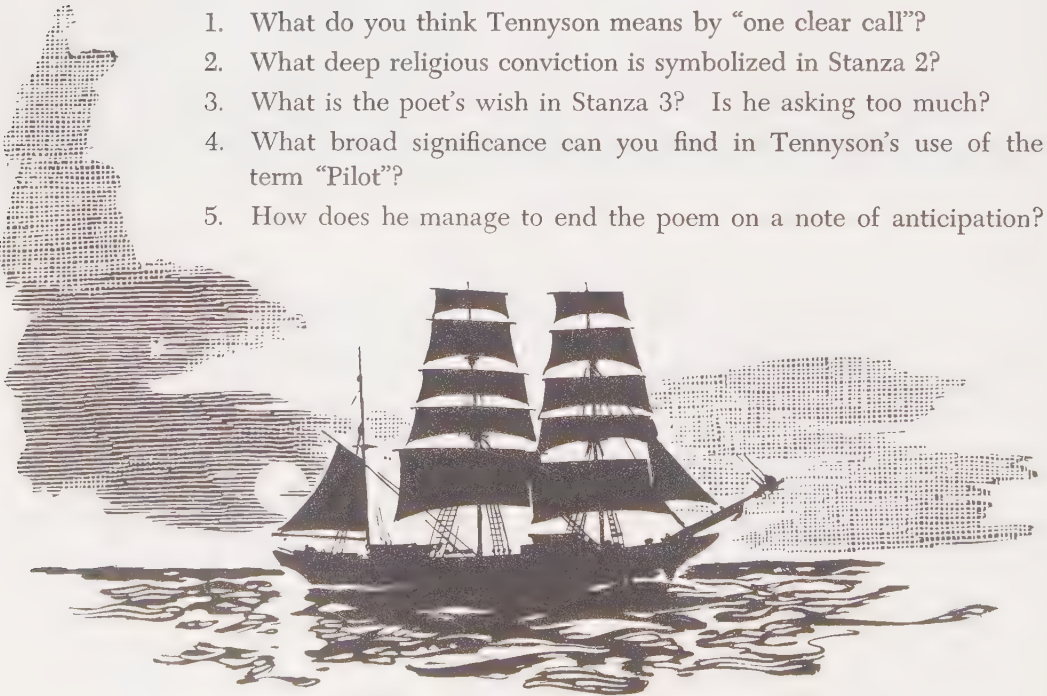
But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;

For though from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar.

Discussion

1. What do you think Tennyson means by “one clear call”?
2. What deep religious conviction is symbolized in Stanza 2?
3. What is the poet’s wish in Stanza 3? Is he asking too much?
4. What broad significance can you find in Tennyson’s use of the term “Pilot”?
5. How does he manage to end the poem on a note of anticipation?



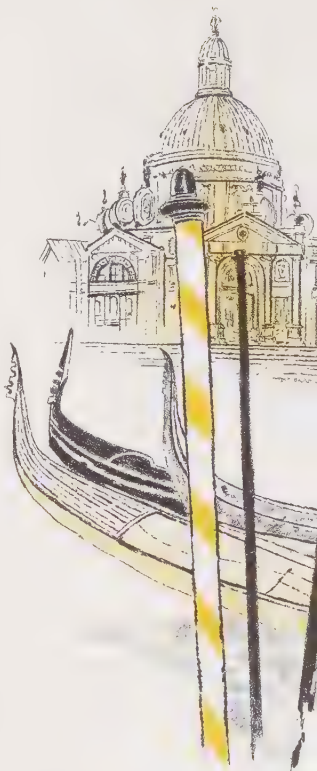
ROBERT BROWNING was born in Camberwell, a suburb of London. His parents were well-to-do, cultured people. Browning attended the local schools and later took a few classes at London University, but most of his education was obtained in the family library. After considering music and diplomacy, he settled on poetry as a career.

The bent that Browning would follow as a poet was indicated by *Pippa Passes*, published in 1841. It is a study in psychology. Pippa, a little factory worker, passes through town on her one holiday of the year, singing happily to herself. As various people hear her, they are struck by particular passages in her song and as a result make decisions affecting their whole lives.

The following year Browning published *Dramatic Lyrics*, which included what has become one of his most famous dramatic monologues, "My Last Duchess." Like so many of Browning's poems, it has an Italian Renaissance setting. The dramatic monologue is a form Browning brought to perfection. Through it an interesting character unknowingly reveals himself in his own words. *Dramatic Romances* followed in 1845, with the well-loved "Home-Thoughts from Abroad." Although the poem *seems* to have been written abroad, it was probably written upon Browning's return from his second trip to Italy.

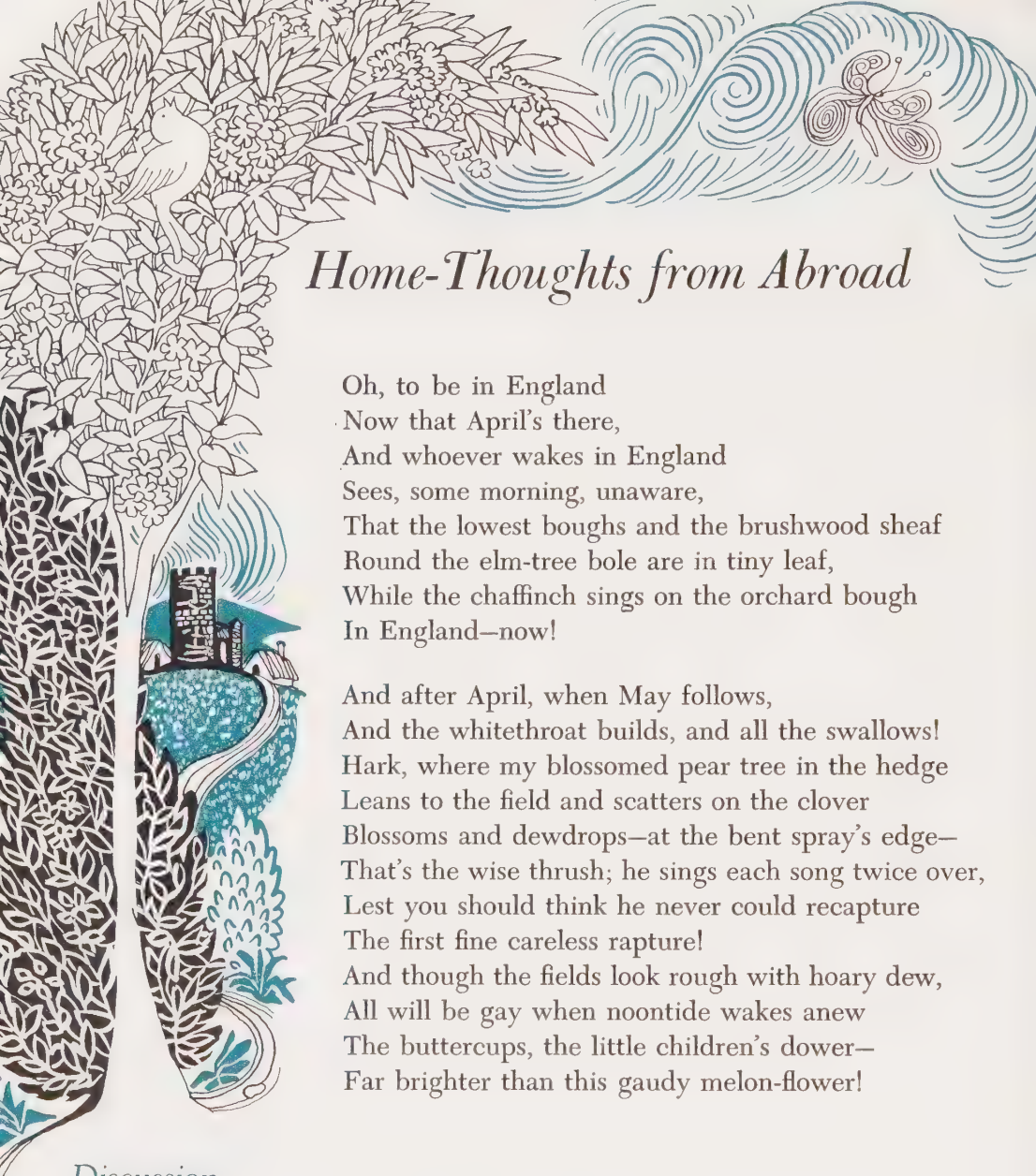
When Elizabeth Barrett published a volume of *Poems* in 1844, Browning sent her a note of congratulation. This began a correspondence which led to their meeting four months later. Elizabeth was an invalid, confined to her bed much of the time. As Browning's cheerful visits continued, her health improved, but feeling that she would never be entirely well, she resolutely rejected Browning's proposals of marriage. Browning persisted, and on September 12, 1846, Elizabeth met him at St. Marylebone Church, where they were married. Secrecy was made necessary by Elizabeth's fear of her father's displeasure. A few days later she again slipped out of the house, and the couple left for Italy.

Browning was a keen psychological observer and the greatness of his poetry lies in his understanding of people. Much of his early poetry was unjustly accused of being obscure, but he finally won the recognition to which he had long been entitled. After his death in Italy his body was brought to London and buried in Westminster Abbey.



1812–1889

ROBERT BROWNING



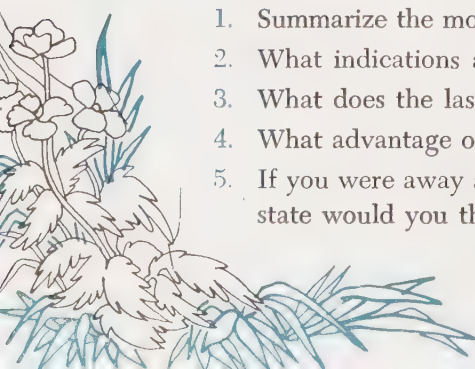
Home-Thoughts from Abroad

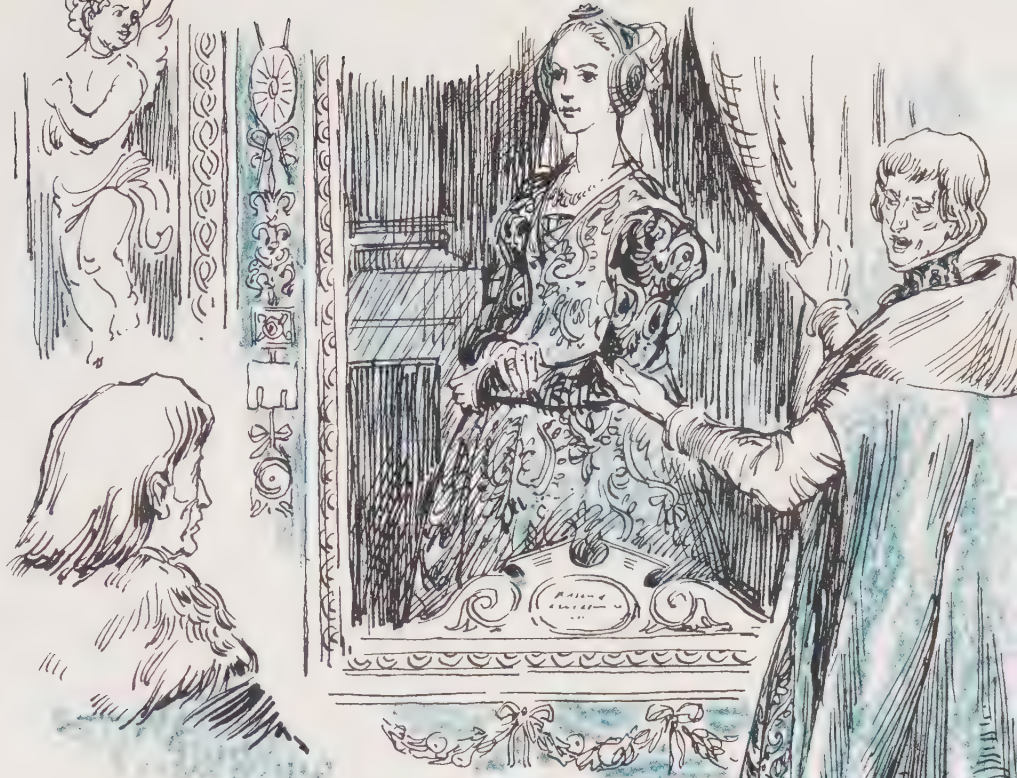
Oh, to be in England
Now that April's there,
And whoever wakes in England
Sees, some morning, unaware,
That the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough
In England—now!

And after April, when May follows,
And the whitethroat builds, and all the swallows!
Hark, where my blossomed pear tree in the hedge
Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray's edge—
That's the wise thrush; he sings each song twice over,
Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture!
And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,
All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
The buttercups, the little children's dower—
Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower!

Discussion

1. Summarize the mood of the poem in a single sentence.
2. What indications are there that Browning was observant?
3. What does the last line add to the poem?
4. What advantage of travel does this poem suggest?
5. If you were away and homesick, what signs of spring in your home state would you think of?





My Last Duchess

Ferrara

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,
Looking as if she were alive; I call
That piece a wonder, now; Fra Pandolf's¹ hands
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.
Will 't please you sit and look at her? I said
"Fra Pandolf" by design, for never read
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
But to myself they turned (since none puts by
The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,
How such a glance came there; so, not the first

¹*Fra Pandolf*. A name Browning made up, as he did that of the sculptor in the last line of the poem.

Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not
 Her husband's presence only, called that spot
 Of joy into the Duchess' cheek: perhaps
 Fra Pandolf chanced to say, "Her mantle laps
 Over my lady's wrist too much," or, "Paint
 Must never hope to reproduce the faint
 Half flush that dies along her throat"; such stuff
 Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough
 For calling up that spot of joy. She had
 A heart . . . how shall I say? . . . too soon made glad,
 Too easily impressed; she liked whate'er
 She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.
 Sir, 'twas all one! My favor at her breast,
 The dropping of the daylight in the West,
 The bough of cherries some officious fool
 Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule
 She rode with round the terrace—all and each
 Would draw from her alike the approving speech,
 Or blush, at least. She thanked men—good; but thanked
 Somehow . . . I know not how . . . as if she ranked
 My gift of a nine-hundred-year-old name
 With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame
 This sort of trifling? Even had you skill
 In speech—which I have not—to make your will
 Quite clear to such an one, and say, "Just this
 Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss
 Or there exceed the mark"—and if she let
 Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set
 Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse
 —E'en then would be some stooping, and I choose
 Never to stoop. Oh, sir, she smiled, no doubt,
 Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without
 Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;
 Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands
 As if alive. Will 't please you rise? We'll meet
 The company below, then. I repeat,
 The Count your Master's known munificence
 Is ample warrant that no just pretense





Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;
 Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed
 At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go
 Together² down, sir! Notice Neptune, though,
 Taming a sea horse, thought a rarity,
 Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me.

²*Together.* To show his "democracy" the Duke is inviting the envoy to walk beside him rather than behind him.

Discussion

1. Why is this poem properly called "a dramatic monologue"?
2. It is, of course, the marvel of the poem that it so completely reveals two characters. What sort of man was the Duke? What had his latest wife been like?
 - What is your opinion of the Duke's claim that a person might be "too soon made glad"?
4. Why didn't the Duke ask his wife to correct her faults?
 - What sort of commands can you think of that might have stopped the Duchess' smiles?
 - Why did the Duke keep his wife's portrait? Why had he had a curtain hung over it? Why does he show the painting to the envoy?
 - Why has the Count's representative come to see the Duke?
 - Why do you think Browning ends the poem by having the Duke call attention to a piece of sculpture? Why this particular piece of sculpture?
 - We sometimes think of the Renaissance as a romantic period in which to have lived. What is the dark side of the picture which Browning reveals?

Research

"My Last Duchess" is set in the fifteenth century during the Italian Renaissance. You might see what you can find out about life among the Italian nobility in that period. Try especially to discover if the imaginary Duke of Ferrara was typical.



ELIZABETH BARRETT was born at Coxhoe Hall, Durham, the first of eleven children of Edward Moulton Barrett. The Barretts were well-to-do, having inherited plantations and slaves in the West Indies. Barrett freed his slaves in 1832. Meanwhile Elizabeth enjoyed a happy childhood in Herefordshire. When she was thirteen her father paid for the printing of fifty copies of her "epic" poem, *The Battle of Marathon*. Two years later she received a spinal injury which made her an invalid for many years. The Barretts moved to London in 1835 and soon thereafter settled at 50 Wimpole Street. Here Elizabeth contracted tuberculosis, and her overly-protective father did much to make her invalidism permanent.

With time on her hands, Elizabeth turned to writing. Two volumes of poetry, dedicated to her father, were published in 1844. One of the poems, "Lady Geraldine's Courtship," classed Robert Browning with Wordsworth and Tennyson. It was this flattering reference which led to Browning's first letter to his fellow-poet. More letters followed, and then began a personal courtship, kept secret out of concern for Elizabeth's father, who objected to any of his children marrying.

On September 12, 1846, Robert and Elizabeth were secretly married and fled to Italy, her raging father declaring that Elizabeth's name must never again be mentioned in his household. London buzzed with the scandal, and the poet Wordsworth probably voiced the opinion of many when he commented, "Well! I hope they understand each other; no one else can." Elizabeth and Robert did understand each other and led an idyllically happy married life until Mrs. Browning's death fifteen years later. Their home in Florence, "Casa Guidi," is preserved as a memorial to the two poets.

The forty-four sonnets Elizabeth wrote during Browning's courtship, but which she did not show him until after their marriage, were published in 1847 as *Sonnets* by E. B. B. Finally in 1850, at her husband's insistence, they appeared under her full name as *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, a title intended to disguise the personal nature of the poems.

During her lifetime Mrs. Browning was generally rated a better poet than her husband, and when Wordsworth died in 1850, many thought she should have been awarded the poet laureateship. Today her sonnets are still considered among the finest in the English language.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING 1806-1861



How Do I Love Thee?

SONNET XLIII

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of everyday's
Most quiet need, by sun and candle light.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints—I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life!—and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.

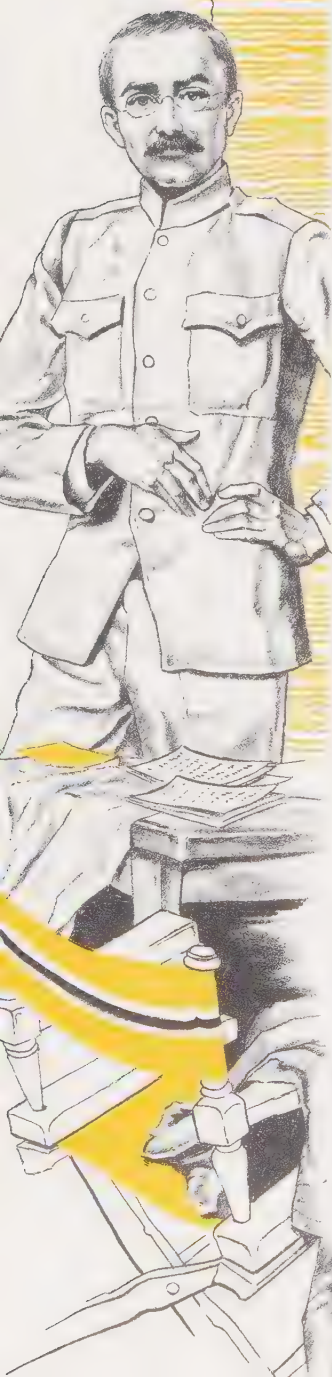


Discussion

1. What are the ways of loving described in Sonnet 43?
2. Point out in this sonnet lines which treat of love's idealism, kindness, emotion, confidence, permanence.
3. What raises the poem above the purely personal purpose for which it was written?

Research

1. Taken together the forty-four sonnets reveal the marvelous transformation love wrought in a dying woman. If this story appeals to you, find the complete volume in your public library.
2. The love story of Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning forms the basis of a highly successful play and motion picture, *The Barretts of Wimpole Street*. Many of you will find this enjoyable reading. Several of you may want to read a scene aloud for your classmates.



RUDYARD KIPLING was born in Bombay, India, where his father was professor in the British School of Art. Rudyard was named after the English lake where his father and mother had first met. At the age of six Rudyard was sent to England to live with relatives and attend school. When he was ready to enter college, he chose instead to return to India, where his father secured him a position on a Lahore newspaper. During the seven years he spent working up from reporter to editor, Kipling became thoroughly familiar with the land of his birth. Interesting material that wasn't news he turned into verse or short stories.

In 1890 Kipling left India for a trip around the world. When he reached London, he found that *Departmental Ditties* and *Plain Tales from the Hills* had made him famous.

Kipling married an American girl, Caroline Balestier, in 1892, and for a time lived in Brattleboro, Vermont. Here his daughter Josephine was born, and it was for her he wrote his animal stories, published as the two *Jungle Books*.

After a journey to South Africa in 1897 the Kiplings settled in England. Kipling visited the United States again in 1899 and for many weeks lay near death of pneumonia in New York. After his return to England the Kiplings settled permanently in Sussex. In 1907 Kipling was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature, the first English writer to achieve this distinction.

Upon his death at the age of seventy Kipling was buried in Westminster Abbey. He left unfinished an autobiography, *Something of Myself*.

Kipling's poetry is noted for its vigor and its musical quality. With equal skill Kipling could write the language of the Bible and the language of the soldier. While poems like "Recessional" and "Danny Deever" are not on the same literary plane, both are excellent works of their kind. "Recessional" is one of the few occasional poems to outlast its occasion. It was written for the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria's reign. The two-week celebration brought to London perhaps the most distinguished crowd ever gathered. Royalty came from all over the world, and colorfully uniformed soldiers from every part of the Empire took part in parades. In contrast to the general tone of glorification, Kipling offered a moving prayer for England's welfare. "Danny Deever" is from *Barrack-Room Ballads*, a volume of poems which interpret sympathetically the life of the British soldier. "Danny Deever" recreates faithfully the language and spirit of soldiers on a tense occasion.

RUDYARD KIPLING 1865–1936

God of our fathers, known of old,
Lord of our far-flung battle-line,
Beneath whose awful Hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

The tumult and the shouting dies;
The captains and the kings depart:
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

Far-called, our navies melt away;
On dune and headland sinks the fire:¹
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!²
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

¹*On dune and headland sinks the fire.* A series of bonfires all around the coast of England were lit on signal as one of the features of the opening of the Jubilee.

²*Nineveh and Tyre.* The fall of Nineveh in 608 B.C. marked the end of the twelve-centuries-old Assyrian Empire. Alexander the Great's capture of Tyre in 332 B.C. laid low the Phoenician Empire.

"Recessional" is reprinted by permission of Mrs. George Bambridge and Doubleday & Co., Inc.

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
 Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe,
 Such boastings as the Gentiles³ use,
 Or lesser breeds without the Law—
 Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
 Lest we forget—lest we forget!

For heathen heart that puts her trust
 In reeking tube and iron shard⁴—
 All valiant dust that builds on dust,
 And guarding calls not Thee to guard,
 For frantic boast and foolish word—
 Thy mercy on Thy People, Lord!

³*Gentiles*. Outsiders. Kipling implies the British are “God’s chosen people.”

⁴*reeking tube and iron shard*. Cannon and cannonball.

Discussion

1. What makes “Recessional” an appropriate title for this poem?
2. In each of the first four stanzas what, specifically, does the poet think people might forget?
3. What is the meaning of “Dominion over palm and pine”?
4. What double meaning, specific and general, can you give to the first two lines of the second stanza?
5. What is the danger to nations of overconfidence? What illustrations from modern history can you think of?
6. Is it natural for a nation to think of itself as “God’s chosen people”? What is the danger in such reasoning?

Research

1. The American composer Reginald De Koven has provided a beautiful musical setting for “Recessional.” If it is not in the repertoire of your school choir, try to obtain a recording for class listening.
2. “Recessional” owes much to the Psalms of David both in thought and spirit. Some student might find it interesting to make a thorough study of the Psalms and compile a list of parallel expressions of ideas.



Danny Deever

"What are the bugles blowin' for?" said Files-on-Parade.¹

"To turn you out, to turn you out," the Color-Sergeant² said.

"What makes you look so white, so white?" said Files-on-Parade.

"I'm dreadin' what I've got to watch," the Color-Sergeant said.

*For they're hangin' Danny Deever, you can 'ear the Dead March play,
The regiment's in 'ollow square—they're hangin' him today;
They've taken of his buttons off an' cut his stripes away,
An' they're hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.*

"What makes the rear rank breathe so 'ard?" said Files-on-Parade.

"It's bitter cold, it's bitter cold," the Color-Sergeant said.

"What makes that front-rank man fall down?" says Files-on-Parade.

"A touch o' sun, a touch o' sun," the Color-Sergeant said.

*They are hangin' Danny Deever, they are marchin' of 'im round,
They 'ave 'alted Danny Deever by 'is coffin on the ground;
An' 'e'll swing in 'arf a minute for a sneakin', shootin' hound—
O they're hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'!*

"'Is cot was righ'-and cot to mine," said Files-on-Parade.

"'E's sleepin' out an' far tonight," the Color-Sergeant said.

"I've drunk 'is beer a score o' times," said Files-on-Parade.

"'E's drinkin' bitter beer alone," the Color-Sergeant said.

*They are hangin' Danny Deever, you must mark 'im to 'is place,
For 'e shot a comrade sleepin'—you must look 'im in the face;
Nine 'undred of 'is county³ an' the regiment's disgrace,
While they're hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.*

¹*Files-on-Parade.* A non-commissioned officer responsible for keeping soldiers in proper formation when marching.

²*Color-Sergeant.* The non-commissioned officer who carries the flag.

³*is county.* Soldiers from Danny's county.

"Danny Deever" is reprinted by permission of Mrs. George Bambridge and Doubleday & Co., Inc.

“What’s that so black agin the sun?” said Files-on-Parade.
 “It’s Danny fightin’ ’ard for life,” the Color-Sergeant said.
 “What’s that that whimpers over’ead?” said Files-on-Parade.
 “It’s Danny’s soul that’s passin’ now,” the Color-Sergeant said.

*For they’re done with Danny Deeever, you can ’ear the quick-step play,
 The regiment’s in column, an’ they’re marchin’ us away;
 Ho! the young recruits are shakin’, and they’ll want their beer today,
 After hangin’ Danny Deeever in the mornin’.*

Discussion

1. Why is Danny Deeever being hanged?
2. Why are his fellow soldiers marched out to witness the execution?
3. What is the reason for removing all insignia from Danny’s uniform?
3. Point out phrases which show the reaction of Files-on-Parade to Danny’s execution.
4. How does the Color-Sergeant’s reaction differ from that of Files-on-Parade?
5. Why are the young recruits shaking? Wherein lies the pathos in the phrase, “they’ll want their beer today”?
6. How does Kipling increase the tension from stanza to stanza?
7. What does the frequent use of repetition add to the effect of the poem?
8. What relationship can you see between the content and the rhythm of the poem?

Research

1. As you doubtless know, “Danny Deeever” has been set to music and has been sung by many fine recording artists. It would be worthwhile to listen to one, or several, recordings. If sheet music is available, perhaps some member of the class would like to sing the song.
2. “Danny Deeever” lends itself exceptionally well to choral reading. The direct quotations of Files-on-Parade and the Color-Sergeant should be solo parts. A small group whose voices blend well should read the explanatory passages, and the whole class could come in on the italicized passages.

JOHN MASEFIELD was born at Ledbury, in Herefordshire, where his father was a country lawyer. He was orphaned as a child and at fourteen ran away to sea as a cabin boy on a merchant ship. Three years later he left his ship in New York and for two years supported himself as bus-boy in a bar and at various other jobs in and near New York. It was while he held a job in a carpet factory in Yonkers that he became acquainted with *The Canterbury Tales*. Its appeal was immediate, and Masefield resolved to become a poet like Chaucer.

Masefield had returned to England and was on the staff of the *Manchester Guardian* when he began seriously to write poetry. His first volume of poems to be published was *Salt-Water Ballads*, in 1902. Included in the volume were what are still his two best known single poems, "Cargoes," and "Sea-Fever."

The volume of poems was followed in 1905 by a collection of short stories, *A Mainsail Haul*; and in 1906 by a novel, *Captain Margaret*. The following year saw the publication of another novel and a collection of plays. Then in 1911 a long narrative poem, *The Everlasting Mercy*, appeared in the *English Review* and Masefield was famous. Showing strong influence from Chaucer, *The Everlasting Mercy* is the story of a boxer, told in his own crude, often vulgar speech. Another narrative poem, *The Widow in the Bye Street*, followed almost immediately. *Dauber*, generally rated as Masefield's greatest narrative poem, appeared in 1913. It is written in the rime royal which Chaucer used for *The Prioress' Tale*. A volume of war sketches, *Gallipoli*, appeared in 1916, and *Sard Harker*, a novel, in 1924. In 1930 Masefield was appointed Poet Laureate.

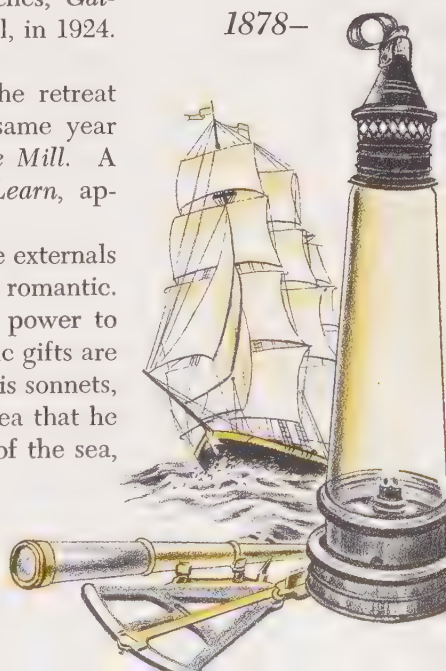
In 1941 Masefield published an account of the retreat from Dunkirk, *The Nine Days Wonder*. The same year he published an autobiographical volume, *In the Mill*. A second autobiographical volume, *So Long to Learn*, appeared in 1952.

Masefield's poetic style is simple. Although the externals of his poems are usually realistic, his themes are romantic. Generally his theme is some variation of man's power to rise above himself through spirit. Masefield's lyric gifts are shown particularly in his short sea poems and in his sonnets, and it is for these poems and his ballads of the sea that he is best known. In depicting the varying moods of the sea, Masefield's skill is unsurpassed.



JOHN
MASEFIELD

1878—



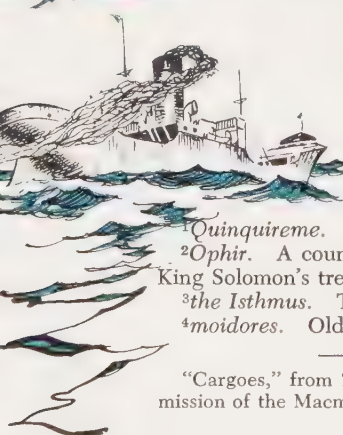
Cargoes



Quinquireme¹ of Nineveh from distant Ophir,²
Rowing home to haven in sunny Palestine,
With a cargo of ivory,
And apes and peacocks,
Sandalwood, cedarwood, and sweet white wine.



Stately Spanish galleon coming from the Isthmus,³
Dipping through the Tropics by the palm-green shores,
With a cargo of diamonds,
Emeralds, amethysts,
Topazes, and cinnamon, and gold moidores.⁴



Dirty British coaster with a salt-caked smoke stack,
Butting through the Channel in the mad March days,
With a cargo of Tyne coal,
Road-rails, pig-lead,
Firewood, iron-ware, and cheap tin trays.

¹Quinquireme. A ship with five banks of oars.

²Ophir. A country or region frequently mentioned in the Bible as the source of King Solomon's treasure.

³the Isthmus. The Isthmus of Panama.

⁴moidores. Old Portuguese coins.

"Cargoes," from *The Story of the Roundhouse*, by John Masefield, is reprinted by permission of the Macmillan Company.

Discussion

1. What do the three stanzas have in common? What is the difference between the stanzas?
2. In what way is the third stanza anti-climactic? Why do you think Masefield gives the British coaster such a prosaic cargo?
3. Note the verb that begins the second line of each stanza. What different pictures does each create?

Sea-Fever

I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by,
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the white sail's shaking,
And a gray mist on the sea's face and a gray dawn breaking.

I must go down to the seas again, for the call of the running tide
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied;
And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds flying,
And the flung spray and the blown spume, and the seagulls crying.

I must go down to the seas again to the vagrant gypsy life,
To the gull's way and the whale's way where the wind's like a whetted knife;
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow rover,
And a quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick's¹ over.

¹*the long trick.* "The ordinary two-hour spell at the wheel or on the lookout"—Masefield's note.

"Sea-Fever" from *The Story of the Roundhouse*, by John Masefield, is reprinted by permission of the Macmillan Company.

Discussion

1. What different aspect of a sailor's life is pictured in each stanza?
2. How do you interpret the phrases "gull's way" and "whale's way"? Do they remind you of any phrase in *Beowulf*? Look up the word *kenning* in your dictionary.
3. What is your emotional reaction to the poem?
4. Point out examples of feminine rhyme. Scan a stanza to see what the meter is.

Research

Some other sea-poems of Masefield's you might enjoy: "Rounding the Horn," "The 'Wanderer,'" "Roadways," "Sea-Change," and "'Port of Many Ships.'" If time permits, you might prepare to read one of these aloud to your classmates.





SIEGFRIED SASSOON

SIEGFRIED LORRAINE SASSOON was born September 8, 1886, into a well-to-do family. His mother encouraged his precocious literary interests, and his first book of verse, *Poems*, was privately printed when he was sixteen. At nineteen Sassoon enrolled at Cambridge University, but he was “sent down” for failure to attend to his studies.

When England declared war on Germany on August 4, 1914, Sassoon immediately enlisted. He was twenty-eight and felt he owed his country something more than poetry. He served four and a half years, with three tours of duty in France and one in Palestine. He was wounded twice in battle and won the Distinguished Service Cross for bravery and the Military Cross for bringing in wounded under fire. Throughout his service he hated war and described the brutality and futility of war in powerful, realistic verse, much of it written in the trenches. The book which established him as a poet was *The Old Huntsman and Other Poems*, published in 1917. It was followed a year later by *Counter-Attack and Other Poems*, from which “Does It Matter?” and “The Hero” are taken.

After the war Sassoon was for several years literary editor of the *Daily Herald* in London. He visited the United States in early 1920, lecturing against war and reading his own poems. In 1928 he published the first of a series of autobiographical novels, *Memoirs of a Fox-hunting Man*, followed by *Memoirs of an Infantry Officer* in 1930 and *Sherston's Progress* in 1936. These fictional accounts were followed by a three-volume autobiography, *The Old Century*, *The Weald of Youth*, and *Siegfried's Journey*, 1939–46.

Although Sassoon has continued to write poetry, generally in a vein of romantic melancholy, it is his war poems which rank him among the important English poets of the twentieth century. “Does It Matter?” and “The Hero” are obviously deeply felt, though the anguish is partly disguised by irony. They, and other war poems, show, usually in brief sketches of individual soldiers, the gap between Christianity and war which horrified Sassoon. They illustrate with sometimes appalling clarity Sassoon's conclusion, stated after the war, “Let no one ever from henceforth say a word in any way countenancing war . . . its spiritual disasters far outweigh any of its advantages.” It is a measure of Sassoon's stature that he showed physical courage in war and moral courage in fighting against war.

Does It Matter?

Does it matter?—losing your legs? . . .
For people will always be kind,
And you need not show that you mind
When the others come in after hunting
To gobble their muffins and eggs.

Does it matter?—losing your sight? . . .
There's such splendid work for the blind;
And people will always be kind,
As you sit on the terrace remembering
And turning your face to the light.

Do they matter?—those dreams from the pit? . . .
You can drink and forget and be glad,
And people won't say that you're mad;
For they'll know that you've fought for your country,
And no one will worry a bit.

Discussion

What aspect of war is brought out in this poem?

- 2 Describe briefly the three types of casualties the poet uses to make his point.

The question in the title is answered both “yes” and “no.” Point out lines in each stanza which answer the question each way.

How do you think the poet intended the last line to be interpreted?

Research

If your library does not have Sassoon's *Collected Poems*, you will find him represented in many anthologies. Some of his other war poems you might look for are “A Working Party,” “On Reading the War Diary of a Defunct Ambassador,” “‘They’,” “The Rear Guard,” and “Aftermath.”





The Hero

"Jack fell as he'd have wished," the Mother said,
And folded up the letter that she'd read.
"The Colonel writes so nicely." Something broke
In the tired voice that quavered to a choke.
She half looked up. "We mothers are so proud
Of our dead soldiers." Then her face was bowed.

Quietly the Brother Officer went out.
He'd told the poor old dear some gallant lies
That she would nourish all her days, no doubt.
For while he coughed and mumbled, her weak eyes
Had shone with gentle triumph, brimmed with joy,
Because he'd been so brave, her glorious boy.

He thought how "Jack," cold-footed, useless swine,
Had panicked down the trench that night the mine
Went up at Wicked Corner; how he'd tried
To get sent home, and how, at last, he died,
Blown to small bits. And no one seemed to care
Except that lonely woman with white hair.

Discussion

1. What is the irony of the title?
2. Was the officer justified in telling the mother "some gallant lies"?
3. Why do you think the mother was eager to believe her son had been a hero?
4. What indication is there that wartime propaganda has had its effect on the home front? Is such propaganda necessary in wartime?
5. Why is a man's character more likely to be judged harshly on the battlefield than in civilian life?

RUPERT CHAWNER BROOKE was born in Rugby, August 3, 1887. His early education was at Rugby School, where his father was one of the masters. He played football and cricket for the school and also began to write poetry. When he was eighteen he won an important prize for his poem "The Bastille." He entered Cambridge University the following year and made a distinguished record there both in scholarship and athletics. He enjoyed all sports and displayed near-professional skill in everything he tried. After his graduation Brooke made trips to Germany and to Italy. In 1913 Cambridge granted him a fellowship, and he made an extended tour of Canada, the United States, and the South Seas. It was early in 1914 in Mataiea, a village on the south coast of Tahiti, that he wrote "The Great Lover."

Brooke came home to a country about to go to war and immediately enlisted in the Royal Navy. He saw service in Belgium, and then in February of 1915 he was sent with the British Mediterranean Expeditionary Force to the Dardanelles. He did not reach his destination, dying on April 23 in a hospital ship off the Greek island of Skyros, of blood-poisoning from an insect bite. He was buried on the island, thus fulfilling the prophecy of his sonnet "The Soldier," published just a few weeks before his death. In 1931 his grave was marked by a twice-life-size bronze statue.

Brooke's claim to fame is two small volumes of verse, *Poems*, published in 1911, and *1914 and Other Poems*, published just before his death. The hundred or so poems vary greatly in quality, but there are few that do not contain some memorable passage. Best known of the poems are "The Great Lover" and "The Soldier." Like all of Brooke's poems, they are a record of his own personality, with all the charm of youthful contradiction, sometimes romantic, sometimes cynical. "The Great Lover" is Elizabethan in its enthusiasm and its alternate gentle satire and tender homesickness. The continued popularity of Brooke's poetry is probably due to the simplicity of its ideas, its musical meters, and its pull upon the imaginations of its readers.

Besides his poetry, Brooke published a number of essays, notably "Puritanism in the Early English Drama" and "John Webster and the Elizabethan Drama." A prose volume, *Letters from America*, was published in 1916. The *Complete Poems of Rupert Brooke* appeared in 1932.

1887-1915

RUPERT BROOKE






The Great Lover

I have been so great a lover: filled my days
So proudly with the splendor of Love's praise,
The pain, the calm, and the astonishment,
Desire illimitable, and still content,
And all dear names men use, to cheat despair,
For the perplexed and viewless streams that bear
Our hearts at random down the dark of life.
Now, ere the unthinking silence on that strife
Steals down, I would cheat drowsy Death so far,
My night shall be remembered for a star
That outshone all the suns of all men's days.
Shall I not crown them with immortal praise
Whom I have loved, who have given me, dared with me
High secrets, and in darkness knelt to see
The inenarrable¹ godhead of delight?
Love is a flame;—we have beaconed the world's night.
A city:—and we have built it, these and I.
An emperor:—we have taught the world to die.
So, for their sakes I loved, ere I go hence,
And the high cause of Love's magnificence,
And to keep loyalties young, I'll write those names
Golden forever, eagles, crying flames,
And set them as a banner, that men may know,
To dare the generations, burn, and blow
Out on the wind of Time, shining and streaming. . . .
These I have loved:

¹inenarrable. Indescribable.



White plates and cups, clean-gleaming,
 Ringed with blue lines; and feathery, fairy dust;
 Wet roofs, beneath the lamplight; the strong crust
 Of friendly bread; and many-tasting food;
 Rainbows; and the blue bitter smoke of wood;
 And radiant raindrops couching in cool flowers;
 And flowers themselves, that sway through sunny hours,
 Dreaming of moths that drink them under the moon;
 Then, the cool kindliness of sheets, that soon
 Smooth away trouble; and the rough male kiss
 Of blankets; grainy wood; live hair that is
 Shining and free; blue-massing clouds; the keen
 Unpassioned beauty of a great machine;
 The benison² of hot water; furs to touch;
 The good smell of old clothes; and other such—
 The comfortable smell of friendly fingers,³
 Hair's fragrance, and the musty reek that lingers
 About dead leaves and last year's ferns. . . .

Dear names,

And thousand other throng to me! Royal flames;
 Sweet water's dimpling laugh from tap or spring;
 Holes in the ground; and voices that do sing;
 Voices in laughter, too; and body's pain,
 Soon turned to peace; and the deep-panting train;
 Firm sands; the dulling edge of foam
 That browns and dwindles as the wave goes home;
 And washen stones, gay for an hour; the cold
 Graveness of iron; moist black earthen mold;
 Sleep; and high places; footprints in the dew;
 And oaks; and brown horse-chestnuts, glossy-new;
 And new-peeled sticks; and shining pools on grass;—
 All these have been my loves. And these shall pass,
 Whatever passes not, in the great hour,
 Nor all my passion, all my prayers, have power
 To hold them with me through the gate of Death.

²*benison*. Blessing.

³*friendly fingers*. A friend once asked Brooke whose fingers he had in mind. He replied that he had been thinking of his childhood nurse.

They'll play deserter, turn with the traitor breath,
Break the high bond we made, and sell Love's trust
And sacramental covenant to the dust.

—Oh, never a doubt but, somewhere, I shall wake,
And give what's left of love again, and make
New friends, now strangers. . . .

But the best I've known,
Stays here, and changes, breaks, grows old, is blown
About the winds of the world, and fades from brains
Of living men, and dies.

Nothing remains.

O dear my loves, O faithless, once again
This one last gift I give: that after men
Shall know, and later lovers, far-removed,
Praise you, "All these were lovely"; say, "He loved."

Discussion

1. How does reading the poem affect your interpretation of the title?
2. Why do some people find keener delight in the little things of life than others? How do you classify yourself in this respect?
3. Quote the passage which indicates Brooke's belief in immortality.
4. Is there anything in the poem that suggests it was written in the South Seas? How do you account for this?
5. The poem is rich in figurative language and vivid images. Point out several good examples of metaphor and personification. Which of Brooke's images recall similar experiences or feelings of your own?

Research

1. If your library does not have *Collected Poems of Rupert Brooke*, some poems you might look for in other anthologies are "Dust," "The Hill," "The Busy Heart," "Dining-Room Tea," and "The Old Vicarage."
2. For a full-length biography of Brooke see *Red Wine of Youth*, written by the American poet Arthur Stringer. For a fictional version see St. John Ervine's novel *Changing Winds*, the hero of which is based on Brooke.

The Soldier

If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is forever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed—
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blessed by suns of home.
And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learned of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.



Discussion

1. In what sense is the title essential to the meaning of this poem?
2. What aspects of the poem do you think would especially endear the poet to his fellow Englishmen?
3. What two sides to death are treated in the octet and sestet of the sonnet respectively? What is the significance of the phrase “a pulse in the eternal mind”?
4. If you did not know this poem was written by the author of “The Great Lover,” what clues in the poem might lead you to think so?

Research

1. An interesting comparison can be made of this poem, “In Flanders Fields,” by the Canadian John McCrea, and “I Have a Rendezvous with Death,” by the American Alan Seeger. Plan to report your conclusions orally, with quotations from all three poems.
2. Would Brooke have had anything in common with Robert Browning? See “Home-Thoughts from Abroad,” page 492. If the question arouses your curiosity, you might expand it into a more extensive research project.



WYSTAN HUGH AUDEN was born in York, February 21, 1907, the son of a retired medical officer. His college education was obtained at Oxford University, where he became the leader of a group of political radicals. Following his graduation in 1928 he taught school for five years in Malvern, England, and in Scotland. His first volume of verse, titled simply *Poems*, was published while he was teaching. In 1933 he gave up teaching to settle in London and devote himself to writing poetry.

In 1935 Auden married Erika Mann, the daughter of the great German novelist, Thomas Mann. The same year he collaborated with Christopher Isherwood on the first of three verse plays the two were to write together, *The Dog Beneath the Skin*. Auden came to the United States in 1939 and settled in Brooklyn. He has since taught at the University of Michigan and at Smith College and has lectured at various other colleges. Auden became an American citizen in 1946. He now spends most of his time in New York.

Among Auden's later volumes of poetry are *New Year Letter*, published in 1941, the most autobiographical of his poems. *For the Time Being*, published in 1944, contains among other poems, "The Sea and the Mirror," a series of monologues assigned to various characters in Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*. They express Auden's views on human nature and human relationships. With *The Age of Anxiety* Auden won the 1948 Pulitzer Prize for Poetry. In the title poem four characters in a New York bar discuss the state of humanity in wartime. In 1951 Auden wrote the libretto for *The Rake's Progress*, an opera by Igor Stravinsky, based on a famous series of engravings by the eighteenth-century English cartoonist, William Hogarth.

In the satirical poetry of his youth Auden parodied the styles of various earlier English poets and his chief effort was directed toward wit. With the outbreak of World War II he became more serious, and much of his later poetry is concerned with problems of religion and philosophy. Critics have complained of the obscurity of some of his poetry, but this criticism does not apply to either "Who's Who," which first appeared in *A Shilling Life Will Give You*, published in 1936, and "The Unknown Citizen," which is from *Another Time*, published in 1940. Both of these poems are clear and vigorous to the point of leaving the reader mentally out of breath.

W. H. AUDEN 1907—

Who's Who

A shilling life¹ will give you all the facts:
How Father beat him, how he ran away,
What were the struggles of his youth, what acts
Made him the greatest figure of his day:
Of how he fought, fished, hunted, worked all night,
Though giddy, climbed new mountains; named a sea:
Some of the last researchers even write
Love made him weep his pints like you and me.
With all his honors on, he sighed for one
Who, say astonished critics, lived at home;
Did little jobs about the house with skill
And nothing else; could whistle; would sit still
Or potter round the garden; answered some
Of his long marvelous letters but kept none.

¹A *shilling life*. An inexpensive biography.

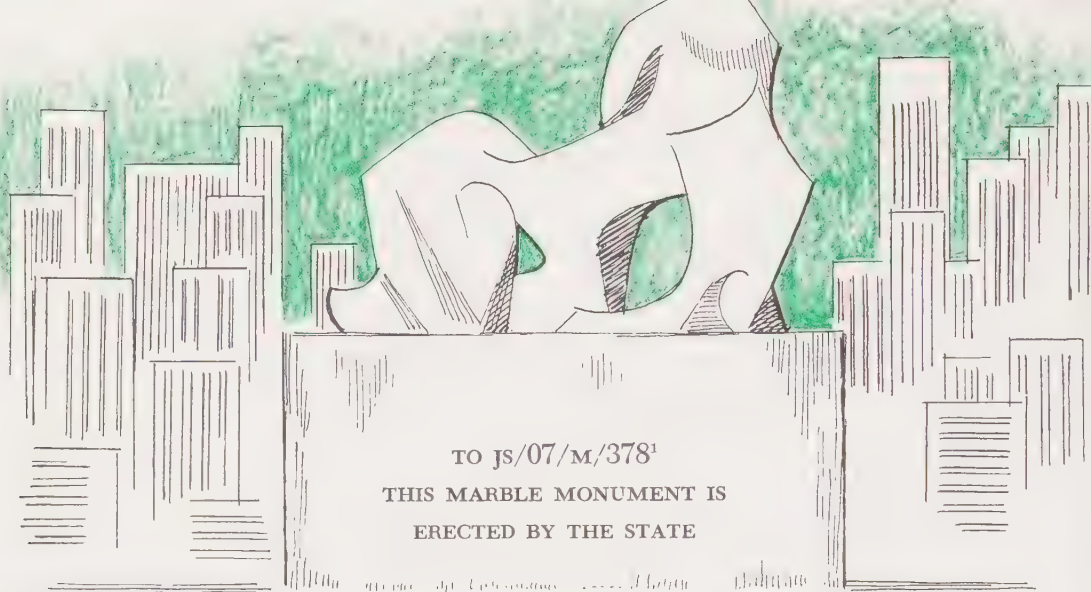
"Who's Who" is from *Collected Poetry of W. H. Auden*, copyright, 1945, by W. H. Auden. Reprinted by permission of Random House, Inc.

Discussion

1. What is the significance of the title?
2. Which "facts" in the poem might have been derived from *Who's Who*? What questions do the usual data of such a volume leave unanswered? In what sense is this ironical?
3. What sort of person was the "one" he loved? Why didn't she keep his "long marvelous letters"?

Research

If you would like to extend your acquaintance with Auden, you might see if your library has *The Collected Poetry of W. H. Auden* or his Pulitzer-Prize-winning volume, *The Age of Anxiety*. Besides the two poems included here, others often included in anthologies are "In Memory of W. B. Yeats," "Stop All the Clocks," and the ballad, "O What Is That Sound?"



The Unknown Citizen

He was found by the Bureau of Statistics to be
One against whom there was no official complaint,
And all the reports on his conduct agree
That, in the modern sense of an old-fashioned word, he was a saint,
For in everything he did he served the Greater Community.
Except for the War till the day he retired
He worked in a factory and never got fired,
But satisfied his employers, Fudge Motors Inc.
Yet he wasn't a scab or odd in his views,
For his Union reports that he paid his dues,
(Our report on his Union shows it was sound)
And our Social Psychology workers found
That he was popular with his mates and liked a drink.
The Press are convinced that he bought a paper every day
And that his reactions to advertisements were normal in every way.

¹JS/07/M/378. This is the code number by which the Unknown Citizen is listed by the State.

"The Unknown Citizen" is from *Another Time* by W. H. Auden, copyright, 1940, by W. H. Auden. Reprinted by permission of Random House, Inc.

Policies taken out in his name prove that he was fully insured,
 And his Health-card shows he was once in hospital but left it cured.
 Both Producers Research and High-Grade Living declare
 He was fully sensible to the advantages of the Installment Plan
 And had everything necessary to the Modern Man,
 A gramophone, a radio, a car and a frigidaire.
 Our researchers into Public Opinion are content
 That he held the proper opinions for the time of year;
 When there was peace, he was for peace; when there was war, he went.
 He was married and added five children to the population,
 Which our Eugenist says was the right number for a parent of his generation,
 And our teachers report that he never interfered with their education.
 Was he free? Was he happy? The question is absurd:
 Had anything been wrong, we should certainly have heard.

Discussion

1. In what sense is the title of the poem ironical?
2. Point out half a dozen or more specific examples of satire in the poem.
3. What apparently determined right and wrong in the Greater Community?
4. How do you interpret the teachers' report that "he never interfered with their education"?
5. In what way are the last two lines critical of our civilization?
6. Why should the State erect a monument to the Unknown Citizen?

Research

1. For a more extended version of the "well-regulated" life, you might find it interesting to read George Orwell's famous novel, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. If several students volunteer to read the book, it could form the basis for a stimulating panel discussion.
2. If you think Auden exaggerates the extent to which modern man is manipulated by outside influences, by all means read a portion, or all, of Vance Packard's *The Hidden Persuaders*. Plan to share some of the more startling revelations with your classmates.



THE NOVEL



A novel is generally defined as a fictitious prose narrative of considerable length, organized in plot form, and presenting a convincing picture of life in the society or period to which the characters, manners, speech, and setting supposedly belong.

In a story sense the novel is a descendant of the epic and the romance. As a literary type, however, the novel is a relative late-comer. It was the middle of the eighteenth century before any writer of fiction produced a book with a central idea, a plot that showed logical progression rather than mere forward movement, and a definite resolving of the plot instead of simply a conclusion. The writer who accomplished this innovation was Samuel Richardson, and for his effort he is generally called the "father of the English novel." (For a discussion of the various works of fiction which in one way or another foreshadowed the novel, see the "Introduction to Prose Narratives," page 2.)

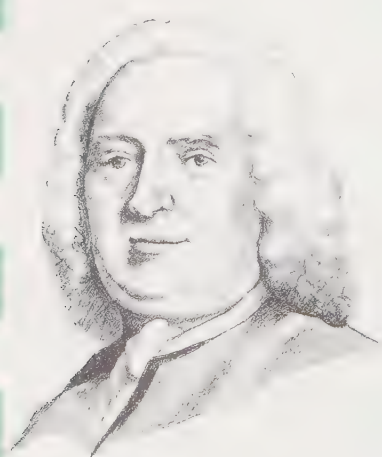
When Samuel Richardson was asked by a printer to prepare a volume of model letters, it occurred to him that

the letters might be more interesting if he could give them a central theme. The theme he settled on was the problems of a servant girl. The connected series of letters the imaginary girl wrote to her parents became *Pamela*, the first English novel, published in 1740.

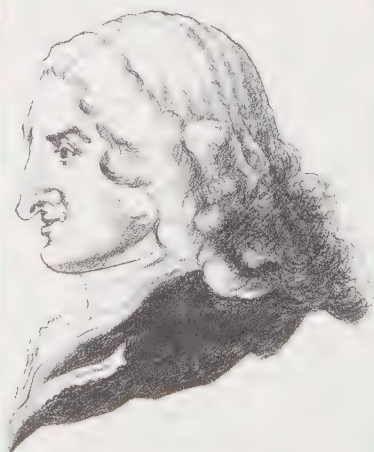
The popularity of *Pamela* prompted Richardson to write another series of letters, this time revolving about the life of a middle-class woman. In this volume, which he titled *Clarissa Harlowe*, Richardson developed suspense and built up to a series of dramatic climaxes, with the obvious result that the volume is more interesting than his first.

Meanwhile Henry Fielding read *Pamela* and found its moralizing and shallow sentimentality as amusing as do many readers today. To poke fun at *Pamela* he wrote a volume about an imaginary brother of Pamela's, Joseph Andrews. Joseph's adventures as a footman in a noble household are told so vividly and humorously that they quite overshadowed Fielding's satirical intention, and *Joseph Andrews*, published in 1742, became the second English novel.

In a later book, *Tom Jones*, Fielding



Samuel Richardson



Henry Fielding

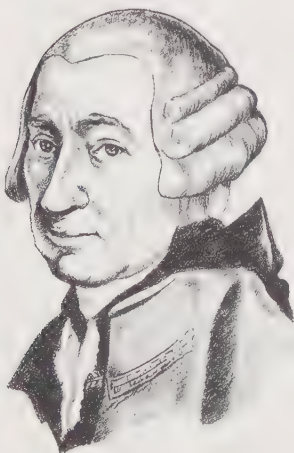
chose as his chief character a foundling, who has been brought up by Squire Allworthy. Tom is a normal young man, who, though he yields to temptation, is essentially honest and generous. The heroine of the novel is Sophia Western, who is not the sentimental saint that Pamela was, but very much a true-to-life woman. *Tom Jones* presents a highly involved combination of three popular plots: the prodigal son, the separated lovers, and the missing heir. The realism of the novel is tempered by a warm sense of humor. Fielding introduced the device of interrupting his narrative frequently to tell his readers his views on various topics suggested by the story, a practice which has continued to mark the English novel right down to the present time.

The third writer to attempt the novel was Tobias Smollett, a Navy surgeon, who is sometimes called the "father of the sea novel." Navy life in the eighteenth century was brutal, and Smollett's heroes in *Roderick Random* (1748) and *Peregrine Pickle* (1751) are coarse rogues. In *Roderick Random* Smollett has the chief character tell the story, a device still in frequent use. *Humphry*

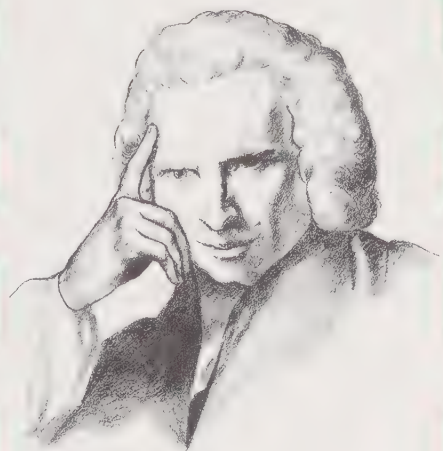
Clinker (1771), the story of the journey of a Welsh family through England and Scotland, is less harsh. Here Smollett introduced the humor of phonetic spelling. Smollett's plots are little more than a series of events, and his characters show little development. His main contribution to the novel was the discovery that certain environments such as the sea tend to produce certain types of characters. Smollett also deserves credit for revealing the possibilities of combining fiction with travel.

Laurence Sterne returned the novel to the sentimentalism of Richardson. Although Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* (1760) is a jumble of more or less unrelated incidents about the Shandy family, it made Sterne famous and introduced a type of novel that still exists—the novel that does not picture life but uses it to create moods and stimulate the feelings of readers. Sterne had a gift for *creating* characters; that is, he could make highly eccentric characters seem convincingly real.

Horace Walpole introduced the "Gothic romance," so-called from his *Castle of Otranto, a Gothic Story* (1764), which he pretended was an ancient manuscript he had discovered.



Tobias Smollett



Laurence Sterne



It is full of wild storms, underground passages, mysterious happenings which are never explained, narrow escapes, and scenes of pure terror. Here was the germ of the still highly popular mystery story.

Samuel Johnson, best known for his *Dictionary*, also tried his hand at writing novels. His *Rasselas* is a philosophical romance about a prince and princess who leave their Happy Valley to search for happiness in the outer world. They fail to find a single happy man and in the end return to their valley. For most modern readers *Rasselas* is made dull by excessive moral preaching.

One of the most enjoyable of the eighteenth century novels is Oliver Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766), a story of the simple family life of a country clergyman, Dr. Primrose. The pathos of family misfortunes and the inherent goodness and faith of the vicar appealed to Goldsmith's contemporaries throughout Europe, and the story can still be read with pleasure.

The coming of the nineteenth century saw a great broadening in the scope of the novel. The increase in the reading public and greater curiosity about all aspects of life led to more realism in novels. In the eighteenth century novels had been mostly about people who seemed to have no responsibilities beyond those of carrying out the author's plot. Now novelists became interested in people who were busy making a living in a wide variety of occupations. Economic changes and political reforms provided problems and conflicts which novelists were quick to seize upon.

The transition was, naturally, not abrupt. Illustrative of the gradual change are the novels of Jane Austen. Miss Austen wrote about country life, which was slow to change, but she showed a marked advance in realism. For characters and plot Miss Austen drew upon the ordinary life of people she knew. There is much good humor and gentle satire in her novels, and Miss

Austen may have been speaking for herself when she had one of her characters say, "For what do we live but to make sport for our neighbors and to laugh at them in our turn?" Miss Austen wrote for her own satisfaction, and her attention to structure and careful workmanship make her novels perfect of their kind.

Sir Walter Scott, who became a novelist after a long career as a poet, sought to combine the romance of history with a portrayal of people as they really are. It was in 1814 that Scott published *Waverley*, the first of his historical romances which came to be known as the *Waverley* novels. Here, as later, he recreated the spirit of the past, though he manipulated historical details to serve the purposes of plot. Scott has given us vast scenes of thrilling action, even though his heroes and heroines are often too haughty and cold

to win our sympathy. The atmosphere and settings of Scott's novels are as important as characters and plot. The vividness of the scenery in the novels was the result of Scott's first-hand study of the actual terrain. Scott's popularity was, and still is, tremendous.

Probably the only English novelist to surpass Scott in long-time popularity is Charles Dickens. Dickens was perhaps closer to his readers than any novelist before or since. From his own experience he knew the hardships of the poor, and he began his writing career as a reporter in daily contact with all sorts of people. Although in his fiction he created caricatures rather than characters, he kept them constantly in contact with the real world. *Pickwick*, *Sam Weller*, *Micawber*, *Sairey Gamp*, *Uriah Heep*, *Bill Sykes*, *Oliver Twist*, *David Copperfield*, *Little Nell* were as well known to the Victorians as



if they were next-door neighbors. Dickens early discovered the romantic and pathetic possibilities of the child victim of society, and it is largely to him we owe the introduction of the child as an important character in novels.

Although the majority of Dickens' novels expose social abuses, his most carefully constructed novel, *A Tale of Two Cities*, is a declaration of his faith in the natural goodness of man. In this novel Sydney Carton sacrifices his life so that Lucie Manette, whom he hopelessly loves, may find happiness with Charles Darnay.

Dickens is a novelist of the heart, appealing to the deepest human emotions. His chief faults are his sentimentality and his love of the melodramatic. His villains are very black indeed and his heroines are paragons of goodness and sweetness.

In contrast to Dickens, William Makepeace Thackeray appeals to the reader's intellect. As a realist and critic of society he is a follower of Fielding. Thackeray hated affectation and hypocrisy. While writing *Vanity Fair*, which ran as a serial over a two-year period, Thackeray wrote to his mother, "What I want is to make a set of people living without God in the world—greedy, pompous men, perfectly self-satisfied for the most part, and at ease about their superior virtue." As the heroine of this corrupt society he created Becky Sharpe, an unscrupulous adventuress. The characters in *Vanity Fair* are introduced as puppets, and Thackeray frequently emphasizes the lesson of his story by pointing out to his readers in a conversational tone the significance of the action. While Thackeray often speaks of his char-

acters with contempt, he is tolerant of their weaknesses and feels pity for the sorrows they bring upon themselves through their sins or their stupidity.

Thackeray was a student of the eighteenth century and his knowledge served him well in writing *Henry Esmond* and its sequel, *The Virginians*. The people of these historical novels were just as real to Thackeray as those of Victorian society, and the result is historical fiction that sounds as though it were written by a contemporary.

An admirer and follower of Thackeray was Anthony Trollope, who wrote over eighty novels dealing with various aspects of English business, political, and country life. Trollope traveled almost constantly as a postal inspector and observed people wherever he went. Mrs. Proudie, who appears in a number of novels, is one of the enduring characters of English fiction. Trollope's best novels relate the doings of society in a cathedral town. Like Jane Austen, Trollope was a master at making the ordinary events of life seem interesting. *The Warden*, *Framley Parsonage*, *Barchester Towers*, and *The Last Chronicle of Barset* still give pleasure by their accurate pictures of a quiet English town.

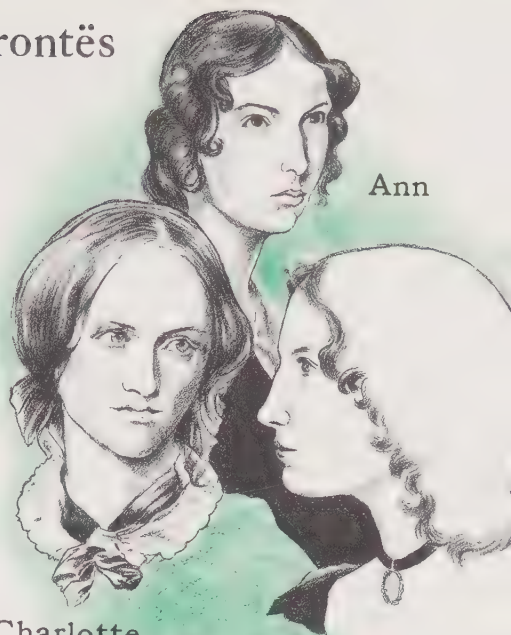
Isolated in the vicarage at Haworth on the Yorkshire moors, three daughters of Patrick Brontë turned to novel writing as a pastime. Charlotte Brontë wrote four novels, of which *Jane Eyre*, the story of a humble but intelligent governess, is best known. Charlotte greatly admired Thackeray's realism, but her own lack of experience forced her to resort to romantic invention. Her sister Emily's *Wuthering Heights* is a story of passionate and tortured souls, powerful in spite of its many im-

The Brontës

probabilities. The atmosphere of both *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights* is tense and grim and reminiscent of the Gothic romances. The third sister Anne, wrote her less intense *Agnes Grey* and *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* from real though limited life.

The most effective moralist among the Victorian novelists and perhaps England's greatest woman novelist was Mary Ann Evans, who wrote under the pen name of George Eliot. With the appearance of her first novel, *Adam Bede*, in 1859, it was clear that she would be a major novelist. A shorter and generally more popular novel, *Silas Marner*, followed in 1861. Both of these novels are psychological analyses of men and women struggling with the problems of everyday life. The characters develop naturally on the basis of environment and inherent traits. If they violate moral laws, they inevitably pay the penalty. If they act unselfishly, the deeds strengthen their characters and make their lives happier.

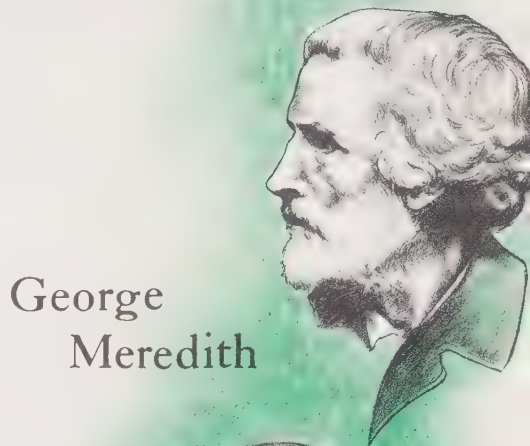
Like George Eliot, George Meredith was a psychologist and moralist. Unlike her, he did not seek to reproduce life but sought instead to focus attention upon significant aspects of life. He sacrificed naturalness in the conversations of his characters for the sake of giving significance to every remark. Like the poet Browning, Meredith developed his characters through scattered flashes of insight. He was concerned with types rather than with individuals. He scorned sentimental heroines, and his women are the first in English fiction that can be described as emancipated. At a time when the idea was revolutionary, Meredith suggested that the ideal marriage is one in which the husband and wife are intellectual



Ann

Charlotte

Emily



George
Meredith



George Eliot



companions. *The Egoist* (1879), generally considered Meredith's greatest novel, is typical of the verbal brilliance and condensed style which make his novels difficult reading.

In some respects Thomas Hardy was also a follower of George Eliot. He, too, was interested in psychology and moral problems. He was more realistic than George Eliot, and his style is simpler than Meredith's. Hardy was essentially a pessimist, and his characters usually find themselves in the grip of a relentless fate. Often they are victims of a hostile environment like Egdon heath in *The Return of the Native*. The setting is always one of the major actors in Hardy's carefully constructed plots.

Although Henry James was born in the United States and spent his youth in Cambridge, Massachusetts, he lived most of his adult life in England, and his novels follow the English rather

than the American pattern. James was an artist by nature and did more than any other English novelist to give artistic form to the novel. There is little action in his novels, his chief interest being an analysis of inner reactions—often the reactions of an American to the older and more subtle culture of Europe. Among the better known novels of Henry James are *The American* (1877), *Daisy Miller* (1879), and *The Ambassadors* (1903).

While the majority of Victorian novelists were subjecting society to an intensive and realistic analysis, a reaction was already setting in. As early as 1883 Robert Louis Stevenson was writing stirring adventures chiefly to entertain. His *Treasure Island* (1883), *Kidnapped* (1886), and *David Balfour* (1893) appealed especially to men and boys, as indeed they still do. For Stevenson, as for Scott, the story was

the important thing. "Fiction," Stevenson explained, "should be to the grown man what play is to the child."

In a remarkable blend of realism and romanticism the more serious Joseph Conrad interpreted the effect of the sea and of strange out-of-the-way places upon the characters and moods of men and women. Critics have pointed out that Conrad's women characters seem too undemonstrative to be natural, but his men are impressively manly in their struggles against nature and their baser selves. Among Conrad's best novels are his own favorite, *The Nigger of the Narcissus* (1897), *Lord Jim* (1900), and *Victory* (1915).

In sharp contrast to the pessimism of Hardy was the optimism of H. G. Wells, who used the novel to present his theories of the future. Wells was firmly convinced that man could and eventually would master his environment. He believed, with deep fervor, in the power of education to move man forward. Among Wells' novels of forecast are *A Modern Utopia* (1905) and *New Worlds for Old* (1908). In Kippis

(1905), *Tono-Bungay* (1909), and *The History of Mr. Polly* (1910) he treats the problems of moving from one social class to another. *Mr. Britling Sees It Through* (1916) is a novel of the home front in the first year of World War I. In his good-humored approach to life and in his substitution of caricatures for characters, Wells is reminiscent of Dickens.

Unlike Wells, Arnold Bennett was no reformer. He chose to depict in an objective way the shortcomings of modern civilization. His novels of the industrial district of England, particularly the potteries of the Five Towns area, are studies of provincial life in a changing environment. Bennett's favorite device was to place in a dull and monotonous environment a character whose temperament was imaginative and romantic. *The Old Wives' Tale* (1908) is Bennett's best and one of the finest novels of the twentieth century, ranked by many critics with Galsworthy's *Forsyte Saga* and Maugham's *Of Human Bondage*.

As Thackeray had satirized upper



D. H. Lawrence



middle-class Victorian society, so John Galsworthy pointed out the faults of the same class at a later date. He presented his characters and problems with exactness and restraint. Unlike Wells, he offered no easy solutions. Galsworthy's great work is his *Forsyte Saga*, which he began in 1906 with *The Man of Property* and concluded in 1921 with *To Let*. Soames Forsyte, the central character in the *Saga*, is representative of the urge to accumulate property and to achieve family solidarity. The flaw in his character is his failure to realize that he cannot buy whatever he wants.

Even if W. Somerset Maugham were to be judged solely by his masterpiece, *Of Human Bondage*, he would have to be considered one of the great novelists

of the twentieth century. He has, however, several other impressive novels to his credit, among them *The Moon and Sixpence* (1919) and *Cakes and Ale* (1930). *Of Human Bondage* is a powerful study of a young man trying to find himself. Both plot and characterization ring true, and most readers find themselves so completely in sympathy with the hero that the tension becomes almost unbearable. Even in his lesser novels Maugham is a careful workman. Although he has himself said that the writer is "more concerned to know than to judge," he treats his characters sternly, in contrast, for example, to Thackeray, who obviously felt a certain fondness for even his villains. Maugham's strongest scorn is directed toward parasitic women. As he has grown older, Maugham has tended more and more to desert the novel for the short story and for autobiography.

Two novelists who sought in different ways to escape what they felt were the artistic limitations of realism are E. M. Forster and D. H. Lawrence. Although Forster's novels are realistic in details, they are often improbable in plot. Forster's favorite theme is the impact of a highly conventional society upon an imaginative and sensitive character. His finest novel is *A Passage to India* (1924), a psychological study of conflicting cultures. Lawrence sought to bring to the novel the discoveries of the new science of psychoanalysis. He believed man's emotional life should be brought into harmony with his intellectual life, and his consequent attack on the repression of instinctive behavior shocked many readers. Lawrence's chief novels are *Sons and Lovers* (1913) and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928).

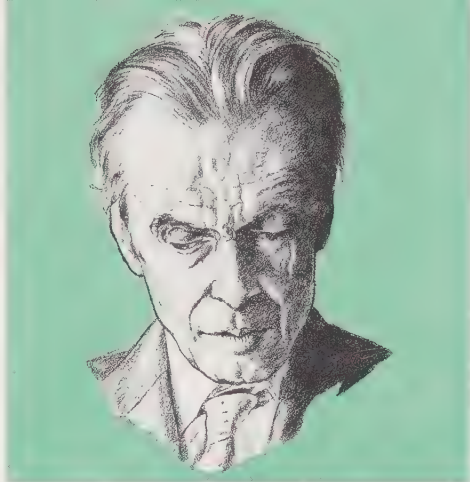


James Joyce

One of the novelists who has been most critical of modern society is Aldous Huxley. *Point Counter Point* (1928) criticizes what Huxley considers the moral and spiritual chaos of contemporary life. *Brave New World* (1932) is a protest against the current emphasis on science at what Huxley believes to be the expense of human values. Later novels include *Time Must Have a Stop* (1944) and *The Genius and the Goddess* (1955).

Undoubtedly the most complex novel of modern times is James Joyce's *Ulysses*, published in Paris in 1922. The plot of *Ulysses* is negligible, consisting of the mostly trivial incidents in the life of Leopold Bloom, an advertising solicitor for a newspaper, during the day and night of June 16, 1904. The significance of the title is that Joyce finds a parallel to the *Odyssey* in each of the events of Bloom's day. The purpose of the book appears to be to show the oneness of all human life.

Today the English novel shows a wide variety of approaches to the interpretation of life. James Hilton's *Lost Horizon* (1933) is romanticism at its most exotic, and *Goodbye, Mr. Chips* (1934) is sentimental in the fashion of Richardson, though more restrained. Evelyn Waugh's novels, *Vile Bodies* (1930) and *The Loved One* (1948), are bitterly satiric, as are the novels of George Orwell, best known in the United States for his *Animal Farm* (1946) and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949). Both the latter novels are symbolic attacks on Russian-type totalitarianism. Graham Greene has written what he calls "entertainments" in *This Gun for Hire* (1936) and *The Third Man* (1950) and such serious novels as *The Power and the Glory*



(1940) and *The End of the Affair* (1952).

While the twentieth century has seen the publication of an abundance of sentimental novels and historical romances, the better writers have had more serious concerns than mere story-telling. Mostly they have sought to interpret their own society in an age of fears and tensions. The stream-of-consciousness technique originated by Sterne has flourished in the present century as never before. Individual characterization, long the hallmark of English fiction, is currently overshadowed by efforts to find wholesale significance in life. It will be interesting to observe whether the English novel will return to its traditional patterns or strike off on some new path.





UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE

(For the biography of Thomas Hardy see page 73.)

Thomas Hardy's novels are sometimes described as gloomy and pessimistic. This is not completely true, nor is it the whole picture. *Under the Greenwood Tree* is as light-hearted and lyrical a novel as one could hope to find. It is a love story with a happy ending, which, it is true, sets it apart from most of Hardy's novels. Hardy is too much the realist, however, to let the story become sentimental. A tender love scene is jarred by the anguished cry of a songbird caught by an owl. And although Fancy Day genuinely loves Dick Dewy, there is a moment when she considers dropping him for a better prospect. When Dick credits his happiness to their complete frankness with each other and says, "We'll have no secrets from each other, darling, will we ever?" Fancy side-

steps neatly and says, "None from to-day." Even the most loving of wives, we are to assume, keep secrets from their husbands. Hardy's view of women is thoroughly a man's view. It is both limited and a little cruel. Like the poet Byron, Hardy sees love as woman's whole existence.

The story of Dick and Fancy is interwoven in a second plot which has to do with the displacement by the organ of the instrumental quire¹ which had for generations provided the music for Mellstock Church. This revolution in church music was occurring widely in rural England during the first half of the nineteenth century, much to Hardy's

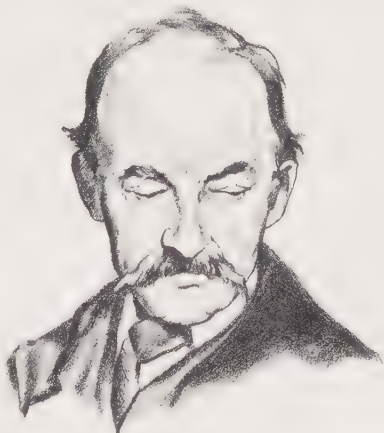
¹quire. Choir. Hardy apparently chose the older spelling as more appropriate to the time of his story.

regret, he makes it clear. His father and grandfather had both played in just such a quire as that of Mellstock, and in the preface to the 1896 edition of the novel he declares that *Under the Greenwood Tree* "is intended to be a fairly true picture, at first hand, of the personages, ways, and customs which were common among such orchestral bodies in the villages of fifty or sixty years ago." This would, of course, place the time of the story roughly between 1836 and 1846. Hardy provided a clear clue to his plan by labeling *Under the Greenwood Tree* "A Pastoral Painting of the Dutch School." What he wanted to do, apparently, was to give verbal permanence to a way of life that was already disappearing in his childhood. He projected his story as a series of pictures painted with the delicate exactness of detail and mellow coloring characteristic of the Dutch painters Hobbema and Vermeer, although the dancing party at the Dewys is more likely to remind modern readers of the peasant gatherings painted by Pieter Bruegel. The reader sees the members of the Mellstock quire under various circumstances but always as a carefully arranged group, serving, in the tradition of Greek drama, as a sort of chorus to comment on the progress of the plot. This was a pattern Hardy was to repeat in all of his major novels. In *The Return of the Native*, for instance, the chorus is a group of turf-cutters. Because of their narrow, but at the same time close-up and undistracted view of things, Hardy's peasants often reveal an unconscious wisdom in their comments on life.

Under the Greenwood Tree is sometimes slighted by critics as "an early work," but the novel itself provides

ample evidence that Hardy had already staked out his literary domain when he wrote it. Even the great tragedies that were to conclude Hardy's career as a novelist do not surpass *Under the Greenwood Tree* in the harmony of rhythm and vigor of diction that are the trademark of Hardy's prose. More than is true of some of his later novels, *Under the Greenwood Tree* remains consistently within Hardy's imaginative range. Here he is thoroughly at home as the historian of folkways and the psychologist of love. *Under the Greenwood Tree* is, as Hardy himself described it, a novel of character and environment. The philosophy of fate—of man struggling against impersonal forces—if not proclaimed, is certainly implicit in the story.

Under the Greenwood Tree was written in 1871 and published in May of the following year. The title is the first line of a song in Shakespeare's comedy *As You Like It*. Hardy had first intended to call the book *The Mellstock Quire*, but according to the biography written by his wife, he chose the phrase from Shakespeare as a concession to the then-current fashion for poetic titles.



UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE

or The Mellstock Quire

A rural painting of the Dutch school



PART THE FIRST

WINTER

MELLSTOCK-LANE

CHAPTER I

To dwellers in a wood almost every species of tree has its voice as well as its feature. At the passing of the breeze the fir-trees sob and moan no less distinctly than they rock; the holly whistles as it battles with itself; the ash hisses amid its quiverings; the beech rustles while its flat boughs rise and fall. And winter, which modifies the note of such trees as shed their leaves, does not destroy its individuality.

On a cold and starry Christmas-eve within living memory a man was passing up a lane towards Mellstock Cross in the darkness of a plantation that whispered thus distinctively to his intelligence. All the evidences of his nature were those afforded by the spirit of his footsteps, which succeeded each other lightly and quickly, and by the

liveliness of his voice as he sang in a rural cadence:

‘With the rose and the lily
And the daffodowndilly,
The lads and the lasses a-sheep-shearing go.’

The lonely lane he was following connected one of the hamlets of Mellstock parish with Upper Mellstock and Lewgate, and to his eyes, casually glancing upward, the silver and black-stemmed birches with their characteristic tufts, the pale grey boughs of beech, the dark-creviced elm, all appeared now as black and flat outlines upon the sky, wherein the white stars twinkled so vehemently that their flickering seemed like the flapping of wings. Within the woody pass, at a level anything lower than the horizon,

all was dark as the grave. The copse-wood forming the sides of the bower interlaced its branches so densely, even at this season of the year, that the draught from the north-east flew along the channel with scarcely an interruption from lateral breezes.

After passing the plantation and reaching Mellstock Cross the white surface of the lane revealed itself between the dark hedgerows like a ribbon jagged at the edges; the irregularity being caused by temporary accumulations of leaves extending from the ditch on either side.

The song (many times interrupted by flitting thoughts which took the place of several bars, and resumed at a point it would have reached had its continuity been unbroken) now received a more palpable check, in the shape of 'Ho-i-i-i-i!' from the crossing lane to Lower Mellstock, on the right of the singer who had just emerged from the trees.

'Ho-i-i-i-i!' he answered, stopping and looking round, though with no idea of seeing anything more than imagination pictured.

'Is that thee, young Dick Dewy?' came from the darkness.

'Ay, sure, Michael Mail.'

'Then why not stop for fellow-craters — going to thy own father's house too, as we be, and knowen us so well?'

Dick Dewy faced about and continued his tune in an under-whistle, implying that the business of his mouth could not be checked at a moment's notice by the placid emotion of friendship.

Having come more into the open he could now be seen rising against the sky, his profile appearing on the light background like the portrait of a gen-



tleman in black cardboard. It assumed the form of a low-crowned hat, an ordinary-shaped nose, an ordinary chin, an ordinary neck, and ordinary shoulders. What he consisted of further down was invisible from lack of sky low enough to picture him on.

Shuffling, halting, irregular footsteps of various kinds were now heard coming up the hill, and presently there emerged from the shade severally five men of different ages and gaits, all of them working villagers of the parish of Mellstock. They, too, had lost their roundness with the daylight, and advanced against the sky in flat outlines, which suggested some processional design on Greek or Etruscan pottery. They represented the chief portion of Mellstock parish choir.

The first was a bowed and bent man, who carried a fiddle under his arm, and walked as if engaged in studying some subject connected with the surface of the road. He was Michael Mail, the man who had hallooed to Dick.

The next was Mr. Robert Penny, boot- and shoe-maker; a little man who, though rather round-shouldered, walked as if that fact had not come to his own knowledge, moving on with his back very hollow and his face fixed

on the north-east quarter of the heavens before him, so that his lower waist-coat-buttons came first, and then the remainder of his figure. His features were invisible; yet when he occasionally looked round, two faint moons of light gleamed for an instant from the precincts of his eyes, denoting that he wore spectacles of a circular form.

The third was Elias Spinks, who walked perpendicularly and dramatically. The fourth outline was Joseph Bowman's, who had now no distinctive appearance beyond that of a human being. Finally came a weak lath-like form, trotting and stumbling along with one shoulder forward and his head inclined to the left, his arms dangling nervelessly in the wind as if they were empty sleeves. This was Thomas Leaf.

'Where be the boys?' said Dick to this somewhat indifferently-matched assembly.

The eldest of the group, Michael Mail, cleared his throat from a great depth.

'We told them to keep back at home for a time, thinken they wouldn't be wanted yet awhile; and we could choose the tuens, and so on.'

'Father and grandfather William have expected ye a little sooner. I have just been for a run round by Ewelease

Stile and Hollow Hill to warm my feet.'

'To be sure father did! To be sure 'a did expect us — to taste the little barrel beyond compare that he's going to tap.'

'Od rabbit it all! Never heard a word of it!' said Mr. Penny, gleams of delight appearing upon his spectacle-glasses, Dick meanwhile singing parenthetically —

'The lads and the lasses a-sheep-shearing go.'

'Neighbours, there's time enough to drink a sight of drink now afore bedtime!' said Mail.

'True, true — time enough to get as drunk as lords!' replied Bowman cheerfully.

This opinion being taken as convincing they all advanced between the varying hedges and the trees dotting them here and there, kicking their toes occasionally among the crumpled leaves. Soon appeared glimmering indications of the few cottages forming the small hamlet of Upper Mellstock for which they were bound, whilst the faint sound of church-bells ringing a Christmas peal could be heard floating over upon the breeze from the direction of Longpuddle and Weatherbury parishes on the other side of the hills. A little wicket admitted them to the garden, and they proceeded up the path to Dick's house.





THE TRANTER'S

CHAPTER II

It was a long low cottage with a hipped roof of thatch, having dormer windows breaking up into the eaves, a chimney standing in the middle of the ridge and another at each end. The window-shutters were not yet closed, and the fire- and candle-light within radiated forth upon the thick bushes of box and laurestinus growing in clumps outside, and upon the bare boughs of several codlin-trees hanging about in various distorted shapes, the result of early training as espaliers combined with careless climbing into their boughs in later years. The walls of the dwelling were for the most part covered with creepers, though these were rather beaten back from the doorway — a feature which was worn and scratched by much passing in and out, giving it by day the appearance of an old keyhole. Light streamed through the cracks and joints of outbuildings a little way from

the cottage, a sight which nourished a fancy that the purpose of the erection must be rather to veil bright attractions than to shelter unsightly necessities. The noise of a beetle and wedges and the splintering of wood was periodically heard from this direction; and at some little distance further a steady regular munching and the occasional scurr of a rope betokened a stable, and horses feeding within it.

The choir stamped severally on the door-stone to shake from their boots any fragment of earth or leaf adhering thereto, then entered the house and looked around to survey the condition of things. Through the open doorway of a small inner room on the right hand, of a character between pantry and cellar, was Dick Dewy's father Reuben, by vocation a 'tranter', or irregular carrier. He was a stout florid man about forty years of age, who surveyed



people up and down when first making their acquaintance, and generally smiled at the horizon or other distant object during conversations with friends, walking about with a steady sway, and turning out his toes very considerably. Being now occupied in bending over a hogshead that stood in the pantry ready horsed for the process of broaching, he did not take the trouble to turn or raise his eyes at the entry of his visitors, well knowing by their footsteps that they were the expected old comrades.

The main room, on the left, was decked with bunches of holly and other evergreens, and from the middle of the beam bisecting the ceiling hung the mistletoe, of a size out of all proportion to the room, and extending so low

that it became necessary for a full-grown person to walk round it in passing, or run the risk of entangling his hair. This apartment contained Mrs. Dewy, the tranter's wife, and the four remaining children, Susan, Jim, Bessy, and Charley, graduating uniformly though at wide stages from the age of sixteen to that of four years — the eldest of the series being separated from Dick the firstborn by a nearly equal interval.

Some circumstance had apparently caused much grief to Charley just previous to the entry of the choir, and he



visible portions. Mrs. Dewy sat in a brown settle by the side of the glowing wood fire—so glowing that with a heedful compression of the lips she would now and then rise and put her hand upon the hams and flitches of bacon lining the chimney, to reassure herself that they were not being broiled instead of smoked—a misfortune that had been known to happen now and then at Christmas-time.

‘Hullo, my sonnies, here you be, then!’ said Reuben Dewy at length, standing up and blowing forth a vehement gust of breath. ‘How the blood do puff up in anybody’s head, to be sure, a-stooping like that! I was just going out to gate to hark for ye.’ He then carefully began to wind a strip of brown paper round a brass tap he held in his hand. ‘This in the cask here is a drop o’ the right sort’ (tapping the cask); ‘’tis a real drop o’ cordial from the best picked apples—Sansoms, Stubbards, Five-corners, and such-like—you d’mind the sort, Michael?’ (Michael nodded.) ‘And there’s a

had absently taken down a small looking-glass, holding it before his face to learn how the human countenance appeared when engaged in crying, which survey led him to pause at the various points in each wail that were more than ordinarily striking, for a thorough appreciation of the general effect. Bessy was leaning against a chair, and glancing under the plaits about the waist of the plaid frock she wore, to notice the original unfaded pattern of the material as there preserved, her face bearing an expression of regret that the brightness had passed away from the



sprinkling of they that grow down by the orchard-rails — streaked ones — rail apples we d'call 'em, as 'tis by the rails they grow, and not knowing the right name. The water-cider from 'em is as good as most people's best cider is.'

'Ay, and of the same make too,' said Bowman. "It rained when we wrung it out, and the water got into it," folk will say. But 'tis on'y an excuse. Watered cider is too common among us.'

'Yes, yes; too common it is!' said Spinks with an inward sigh, whilst his eyes seemed to be looking at the case in an abstract form rather than at the scene before him. 'Such poor liquor do make a man's throat feel very melancholy — and is a disgrace to the name of stimmilent.'

'Come in, come in, and draw up to the fire; never mind your shoes,' said Mrs. Dewy, seeing that all except Dick had paused to wipe them upon the door-mat. 'I am glad that you've stepped up-along at last; and, Susan, you run down to Grammer Kaytes's and see if you can borrow some larger candles than these fourteens. Tommy Leaf, don't ye be afeard! Come and sit here in the settle.'

This was addressed to the young man before mentioned, consisting chiefly of a human skeleton and a smock-frock, who was very awkward in his movements, apparently on account of having grown so very fast that before he had had time to get used to his height he was higher.

'Hee — hee — ay!' replied Leaf, letting his mouth continue to smile for some time after his mind had done smiling, so that his teeth remained in view as the most conspicuous members of his body.

'Here, Mr. Penny,' resumed Mrs.

Dewy, 'you sit in this chair. And how's your daughter, Mrs. Brownjohn?'

'Well, I suppose I must say pretty fair.' He adjusted his spectacles a quarter of an inch to the right. 'But she'll be worse before she's better, 'a b'lieve.'

'Indeed — poor soul! And how many will that make in all, four or five?'

'Five; they've buried three. Yes, five; and she not much more than a maid yet. She do know the multiplication table onmistakable well. However, 'twas to be, and none can gainsay it.'



Mrs. Dewy resigned Mr. Penny. 'Wonder where your grandfather James is?' she inquired of one of the children. 'He said he'd drop in to-night.'

'Out in fuel-house with grandfather William,' said Jimmy.

'Now let's see what we can do,' was heard spoken about this time by the tranter in a private voice to the barrel, beside which he had again established himself, and was stooping to cut away the cork.

'Reuben, don't make such a mess o' tapping that barrel as is mostly made in this house,' Mrs. Dewy cried from

the fireplace. 'T'd tap a hundred without wasting more than you do in one. Such a squizzling and squirting job as 'tis in your hands! There, he always was such a clumsy man indoors.'

'Ay, ay; I know you'd tap a hundred beautiful, Ann—I know you would; two hundred, perhaps. But I can't promise. This is a' old cask, and the wood's rotted away about the tap-hole. The husbird of a feller Sam Lawson—that ever I should call'n such, now he's dead and gone, poor heart!—took me in



completely upon the feat of buying this cask. "Reub," says he—"a always used to call me plain Reub, poor old heart!—"Reub," he said says he, "that there cask, Reub, is as good as new; yes, good as new. 'Tis a wine-hogshead; the best port-wine in the commonwealth have been in that there cask; and you shall have en for ten shillens, Reub,"—"a said says he—"he's worth twenty, ay, five-and-twenty, if he's worth one; and an iron hoop or two put round en among the wood ones will make en worth thirty shillens of any man's money, if —"

'I think I should have used the eyes that Providence gave me to use afore I paid any ten shillens for a jimcrack wine-barrel; a saint is sinner enough not to be cheated. But 'tis like all your family was, so easy to be deceived.'

'That's as true as gospel of this member,' said Reuben.

Mrs. Dewy began a smile at the answer, then altering her lips and refolding them so that it was not a smile, commenced smoothing little Bessy's hair; the tranter having meanwhile suddenly become oblivious to conversation, occupying himself in a deliberate cutting and arrangement of some more brown paper for the broaching operation.

'Ah, who can believe sellers!' said old Michael Mail in a carefully-cautious voice, by way of tiding over this critical point of affairs.

'No one at all,' said Joseph Bowman, in the tone of a man fully agreeing with everybody.

'Ay,' said Mail, in the tone of a man who did not agree with everybody as a rule, though he did now; 'I knowed a' auctioneering feller once—a very friendly feller 'a was too. And so one hot day as I was walking down the front street o' Casterbridge, jist below the King's Arms, I passed a' open window and see him inside, stuck upon his perch, a-selling off. I jist nodded to en in a friendly way as I passed, and went my way, and thought no more about it. Well, next day, as I was oilen my boots by fuel-house door, if a letter didn't come wi' a bill charging me with a feather-bed, bolster, and pillers, that I had bid for at Mr. Taylor's sale. The slim-faced martel had knocked 'em down to me because I nodded to en in my friendly way; and I had to pay

for 'em too. Now, I hold that that was coming it very close, Reuben?

'Twas close, there's no denying,' said the general voice.

'Too close, 'twas,' said Reuben, in the rear of the rest. 'And as to Sam Lawson — poor heart! now he's dead and gone too! — I'll warrant, that if so be I've spent one hour in making hoops for that barrel, I've spent fifty, first and last. That's one of my hoops' — touching it with his elbow — 'that's one of mine, and that, and that, and all these.'

'Ah, Sam was a man,' said Mr. Penny, contemptively.

'Sam was!' said Bowman.

'Especially for a drap o' drink,' said the tranter.

'Good, but not religious-good,' suggested Mr. Penny.

The tranter nodded. Having at last made the tap and hole quite ready, 'Now then, Suze, bring a mug,' he said. 'Here's luck to us, my sonnies!'

The tap went in, and the cider immediately squirted out in a horizontal shower over Reuben's hands, knees, and leggings, and into the eyes and neck of Charley, who, having temporarily put off his grief under pressure of more interesting proceedings, was squatting down and blinking near his father.

'There 'tis again!' said Mrs. Dewy.

'Devil take the hole, the cask, and Sam Lawson too, that good cider should be wasted like this!' exclaimed the tranter. 'Your thumb! Lend me your thumb, Michael! Ram it in here, Michael! I must get a bigger tap, my sonnies.'

'Idd it cold inthide te hole?' inquired Charley of Michael, as he continued in a stooping posture with his thumb in the cork-hole.

'What wonderful odds and ends that chiel has in his head to be sure!' Mrs. Dewy admiringly exclaimed from the distance. 'I lay a wager that he thinks more about how 'tis inside that barrel than in all the other parts of the world put together.'

All persons present put on a speaking countenance of admiration for the cleverness alluded to, in the midst of which Reuben returned. The operation was then satisfactorily performed; when Michael arose and stretched his head to the extremist fraction of height that his body would allow of, to re-straighten his back and shoulders — thrusting out his arms and twisting his features to a mass of wrinkles to emphasize the relief acquired. A quart or two of the beverage was then brought to table, at which all the new arrivals reseated themselves with wide-spread knees, their eyes meditatively seeking out any speck or knot in the board upon which the gaze might precipitate itself.

'Whatever is father a-biding out in fuel-house so long for?' said the tranter. 'Never such a man as father for two things — cleaving up old dead apple-tree wood and playing the bass-viol. 'A'd pass his life between the two, that 'a would.' He stepped to the door and opened it.

'Father!'

'Ay!' rang thinly round the corner.

'Here's the barrel tapped, and we all a-waiting!'

A series of dull thuds, that had been heard without for some time past, now ceased; and after the light of a lantern had passed the window and made wheeling rays upon the ceiling inside the eldest of the Dewy family appeared.

THE ASSEMBLED CHOIR

CHAPTER III

WILLIAM DEWY — otherwise grandfather William — was now about seventy; yet an ardent vitality still preserved a warm and roughened bloom upon his face, which reminded gardeners of the sunny side of a ripe ribstone-pippin¹; though a narrow strip of forehead, that was protected from the weather by lying above the line of his hat-brim, seemed to belong to some town man, so gentlemanly was its whiteness. His was a humorous and kindly nature, not un-mixed with a frequent melancholy; and he had a firm religious faith. But to his neighbours he had no character in particular. If they saw him pass by their windows when they had been bottling off old mead², or when they had just been called long-headed men who might do anything in the world if they chose, they thought concerning him, 'Ah, there's that good-hearted man — open as a child!' If they saw him just after losing a shilling or half-a-crown, or accidentally letting fall a piece of crockery, they thought, 'There's that poor weak-minded man Dewy again! Ah, he's never done much in the world either!' If he passed when fortune neither smiled nor frowned on them, they merely thought him old William Dewy.

'Ah, so's — here you be! — Ah, Michael and Joseph and John — and you

too, Leaf! a merry Christmas all! We shall have a rare log-wood fire directly, Reub, to reckon by the toughness of the job I had in cleaving 'em.' As he spoke he threw down an armful of logs which fell in the chimney-corner with a rumble, and looked at them with something of the admiring enmity he would have bestowed on living people who had been very obstinate in holding their own. 'Come in, grandfather James.'



¹*ribstone-pippin.* A type of apple popular in England.

²*mead.* A drink of fermented honey and water.

Old James (grandfather on the maternal side) had simply called as a visitor. He lived in a cottage by himself, and many people considered him a miser; some, rather slovenly in his habits. He now came forward from behind grandfather William, and his stooping



figure formed a well-illuminated picture as he passed towards the fireplace. Being by trade a mason, he wore a long linen apron reaching almost to his toes, corduroy breeches and gaiters³, which, together with his boots, graduated in tints of whitish-brown by constant friction against lime and stone. He also wore a very stiff fustian coat, having folds at the elbows and shoulders as unvarying in their arrangement as those

in a pair of bellows: the ridges and the projecting parts of the coat collectively exhibiting a shade different from that of the hollows, which were lined with small ditch-like accumulations of stone and mortar-dust. The extremely large side-pockets, sheltered beneath wide flaps, bulged out convexly whether empty or full; and as he was often engaged to work at buildings far away — his breakfasts and dinners being eaten in a strange chimney-corner, by a garden wall, on a heap of stones, or walking along the road — he carried in these pockets a small tin canister of butter, a small canister of sugar, a small canister of tea, a paper of salt, and a paper of pepper; the bread, cheese, and meat, forming the substance of his meals, hanging up behind him in his basket among the hammers and chisels. If a passer-by looked hard at him when he was drawing forth any of these, ‘My buttery,’ he said, with a pinched smile.

‘Better try over number seventy-eight before we start, I suppose?’ said William, pointing to a heap of old Christmas-carol books on a side table.

‘Wi’ all my heart,’ said the choir generally.

‘Number seventy-eight was always a teaser — always. I can mind him ever since I was growing up a hard boy-chap.’

‘But he’s a good tune, and worth a mint o’ practice,’ said Michael.

‘He is; though I’ve been mad enough wi’ that tune at times to seize en and tear en all to linnit. Ay, he’s a splendid carrel — there’s no denying that.’

‘The first line is well enough,’ said Mr. Spinks; ‘but when you come to “O, thou man,” you make a mess o’t.’

³*gaiters.* Leggings.

'We'll have another go into en, and see what we can make of the martel⁴. Half-an-hour's hammering at en will conquer the toughness of en; I'll warn it.'

'Od rabbit it all!' said Mr. Penny, interrupting with a flash of his spectacles, and at the same time clawing at something in the depths of a large side-pocket. 'If so be I hadn't been as scatter-brained and thirtingill as a chiel I should have called at the schoolhouse wi' a boot as I cam up along. Whatever is coming to me I really can't estimate at all!'

'The brain has its weaknesses,' murmured Mr. Spinks, waving his head ominously. Mr. Spinks was considered to be a scholar, having once kept a night-school, and always spoke up to that level.

'Well, I must call with en the first thing to-morrow. And I'll empt my pocket o' this last too, if you don't mind, Mrs. Dewy.' He drew forth a last, and placed it on a table at his elbow. The eyes of three or four followed it.

'Well,' said the shoemaker, seeming to perceive that the interest the object had excited was greater than he had anticipated, and warranted the last's being taken up again and exhibited; 'now, whose foot do ye suppose this last was made for? It was made for Geoffrey Day's father, over at Yalbury Wood. Ah, many's the pair o' boots he've had off the last! Well, when 'a died, I used the last for Geoffrey, and have ever since, though a little doctoring was wanted to make it do. Yes, a very queer natured last it is now, 'a b'lieve,' he continued,



turning it over caressingly. 'Now, you notice that there' (pointing to a lump of leather bradded to the toe), 'that's a very bad bunion that he've had ever since 'a was a boy. Now, this remarkable large piece' (pointing to a patch nailed to the side), 'shows a' accident he received by the tread of a horse, that squashed his foot a'most to a pomace⁵. The horse-shoe came full-butt on this point, you see. And so I've just been over to Geoffrey's, to know if he wanted his bunion altered or made bigger in the new pair I'm making.'

During the latter part of this speech Mr. Penny's left hand wandered towards the cider-cup as if the hand had no connection with the person speaking; and bringing his sentence to an abrupt close all but the extreme margin of the bootmaker's face was eclipsed by the circular brim of the vessel.

'However, I was going to say,' continued Penny, putting down the cup, 'I ought to have called at the school' — here he went groping again in the depths of his pocket — 'to leave this without fail, though I suppose the first thing to-morrow will do.'

He now drew forth and placed upon the table a boot — small, light, and prettily shaped — upon the heel of which he had been operating.

'The new schoolmistress's!'

'Ay, no less, Miss Fancy Day; as neat a little figure of fun as ever I see, and just husband-high.'

⁴*martel*. An old word for hammer.

⁵*pomace*. Pulp from crushing fruit.



'Never Geoffrey's daughter Fancy?' said Bowman, as all glances present converged like wheel-spokes upon the boot in the centre of them.

'Yes, sure,' resumed Mr. Penny, regarding the boot as if that alone were his auditor; 'tis she that's come here schoolmistress. You knowed his daughter was in training?'

'Strange, isn't it, for her to be here Christmas-night, Master Penny?'

'Yes; but here she is, 'a b'lieve.'

'I know how she comes here — so I do!' chirruped one of the children.

'Why?' Dick inquired with subtle interest.

'Pa'son Maybold was afraid he couldn't manage us all to-morrow at the dinner, and he talked o' getting her jist to come over and help him hand about the plates, and see we didn't make pigs of ourselves; and that's what she's come for!'

'And that's the boot, then,' continued its mender imaginatively, 'that she'll

walk to church in to-morrow morning. I don't care to mend boots I don't make; but there's no knowing what it may lead to, and her father always comes to me.'

There, between the cider-mug and the candle, stood this interesting receptacle of the little unknown's foot; and a very pretty boot it was. A character, in



fact — the flexible bend at the instep, the rounded localities of the small nestling toes, scratches from careless scampers now forgotten — all, as repeated in the tell-tale leather, evidencing a nature and a bias. Dick surveyed it with a delicate feeling that he had no right to do so without having first asked the owner of the foot's permission.

'Now, neighbours, though no common eye can see it,' the shoemaker went on, 'a man in the trade can see the likeness

between this boot and that last, although that is so deformed as hardly to recall one of God's creatures, and this is one of as pretty a pair as you'd get for ten-and-sixpence in Casterbridge. To you, nothing; but 'tis father's voot and daughter's voot to me, as plain as houses.'



'I don't doubt there's a likeness, Master Penny — a mild likeness — a fantastical likeness,' said Spinks. 'But *I* han't got imagination enough to see it, perhaps.'

Mr. Penny adjusted his spectacles.

'Now, I'll tell ye what happened to me once on this very point. You used to know Johnson the dairyman, William?'

'Ay, sure; I did.'

'Well, 'twasn't opposite his house, but a little lower down — by his paddock, in

front o' Parkmade Pool. I was a-bearing across towards Bloom's End, and lo and behold, there was a man just brought out o' the Pool, dead; he had un'rayed for a dip, but not being able to pitch it just there had gone in flop over his head. Men looked at en; women looked at en; children looked at en; nobody knowed en. He was covered wi' a sheet; but I caught sight of his voot, just showing out as they carried en along. "I don't care what name that man went by," I said, in my way, "but he's John Woodward's brother; I can swear to the family voot." At that very moment up comes John Woodward, weeping and teaving, "I've lost my brother! I've lost my brother!"'

'Only to think of that!' said Mrs. Dewy.

'Tis well enough to know this foot and that foot,' said Mr. Spinks. 'Tis long-headed, in fact, as far as feet do



go. I know little, 'tis true — I say no more; but show *me* a man's foot, and I'll tell you that man's heart.'

'You must be a cleverer feller, then, than mankind in jinerai,' said the tranter.

'Well, that's nothing for me to speak of,' returned Mr. Spinks. 'A man lives and learns. Maybe I've read a leaf or two in my time. I don't wish to say anything large, mind you; but nevertheless, maybe I have.'

'Yes, I know,' said Michael soothingly, 'and all the parish knows, that ye've read sommat of everything a'most, and have been a great filler of young folks' brains. Learning's a worthy thing, and ye've got it, Master Spinks.'

'I make no boast, though I may have read and thought a little; and I know — it may be from much perusing, but I make no boast — that by the time a man's head is finished 'tis almost time for him to creep underground. I am over forty-five.'

Mr. Spinks emitted a look to signify that if his head was not finished, nobody's head ever could be.

'Talk of knowing people by their feet!' said Reuben. 'Rot me, my sonnies, then, if I can tell what a man is from all his members put together, oftentimes.'

'But still, look is a good deal,' observed grandfather William absently, moving and balancing his head till the tip of grandfather James's nose was exactly in a right line with William's eye and the mouth of a miniature cavern he was discerning in the fire. 'By the way,' he continued in a fresher voice, and looking up, 'that young creature, the schoolmis'ess, must be sung to to-night wi' the rest? If her ear is as fine as her face, we shall have enough to do to be up-sides with her.'

'What about her face?' said young Dewy.

'Well, as to that,' Mr. Spinks replied, 'tis a face you can hardly gainsay. A very good pink face, as far as that do go. Still, only a face, when all is said and done.'

'Come, come, Elias Spinks, say she's a pretty maid and have done wi' her,' said the tranter, again preparing to visit the cider-barrel.

Discussion

1. Explain briefly the significance of the three chapter titles.
2. Why does Hardy begin his story with a paragraph on the sounds of trees?
3. In the second paragraph of the story a human being is introduced. How much do we learn from the single sentence devoted to him?
4. In Chapter II we meet the Dewey family. Sort them out by name. Are they a happy family? Quote lines to support your opinion.
5. What hints does Chapter III offer that Fancy Day is going to become an important character in the story?



CHAPTER IV

SHORTLY after ten o'clock the singing-boys arrived at the tranter's house, which was invariably the place of meeting, and preparations were made for the start. The older men and musicians wore thick coats, with stiff perpendicular collars, and coloured handkerchiefs wound round and round the neck till the end came to hand, over all which they just showed their ears and noses, like people looking over a wall. The remainder, stalwart ruddy men and boys, were dressed mainly in snow-white smock-frocks, embroidered upon the shoulders and breasts in ornamental forms of hearts, diamonds, and zigzags. The cider-mug was emptied for the ninth time, the music-books were arranged, and the pieces finally decided upon. The boys in the meantime put the old horn-lanterns in order, cut candles into short lengths to fit the lanterns; and, a thin fleece of snow having fallen since the early part of the evening, those who had no leg-

gings went to the stable and wound wisps of hay round their ankles to keep the insidious flakes from the interior of their boots.

Mellstock was a parish of considerable acreage, the hamlets composing it lying at a much greater distance from each other than is ordinarily the case. Hence several hours were consumed in playing and singing within hearing of every family, even if but a single air were bestowed on each. There was Lower Mellstock, the main village; half a mile from this were the church and vicarage, and a few other houses, the spot being rather lonely now, though in past centuries it had been the most thickly-populated quarter of the parish. A mile north-east lay the hamlet of Upper Mellstock, where the tranter lived; and at other points knots of cottages, besides solitary farmsteads and dairies.

Old William Dewy, with the violoncello, played the bass; his grandson

Dick the treble violin; and Reuben and Michael Mail the tenor and second violins respectively. The singers consisted of four men and seven boys, upon whom devolved the task of carrying and attending to the lanterns, and holding the books open for the players. Directly music was the theme old William ever and instinctively came to the front.

'Now mind, neighbours,' he said, as they all went out one by one at the door, he himself holding it ajar and regarding them with a critical face as they passed, like a shepherd counting out his sheep. 'You two counter-boys, keep your ears open to Michael's fingering, and don't ye go straying into the treble part along o' Dick and his set, as ye did last year; and mind this especially when we be in "Arise, and hail". Billy Chimlen, don't you sing quite so raving mad as you fain would; and, all o' ye, whatever ye do, keep from making a great scuffle on the ground when we go in at people's gates; but go quietly, so as to strike up all of a sudden, like spirits.'

'Farmer Ledlow's first?'

'Farmer Ledlow's first; the rest as usual.'

'And, Voss,' said the tranter terminatively, 'you keep house here till about half-past two; then heat the metheglin⁶ and cider in the warmer you'll find turned up upon the copper; and bring it wi' the victuals to church-hatch, as th'st know.'

Just before the clock struck twelve they lighted the lanterns and started. The moon, in her third quarter, had risen since the snowstorm; but the dense accumulation of snow-cloud weakened her power to a faint twilight which was rather pervasive of the landscape than traceable to the sky. The breeze had



gone down, and the rustle of their feet and tones of their speech echoed with an alert rebound from every post, boundary-stone, and ancient wall they passed, even where the distance of the echo's origin was less than a few yards. Beyond their own slight noises nothing was to be heard save the occasional bark of foxes in the direction of Yalbury Wood, or the brush of a rabbit among the grass now and then as it scampered out of their way.

Most of the outlying homesteads and hamlets had been visited by about two o'clock; they then passed across the outskirts of a wooded park toward the main village, nobody being at home at the Manor. Pursuing no recognized track, great care was necessary in walking lest their faces should come in contact with the low-hanging boughs of the old lime-trees, which in many spots formed dense overgrowths of interlaced branches.

⁶*metheglin.* Another name for mead.



'Times have changed from the times they used to be,' said Mail, regarding nobody can tell what interesting old panoramas with an inward eye, and letting his outward glance rest on the ground because it was as convenient a position as any. 'People don't care much about us now! I've been thinking we must be almost the last left in the county of the old string players? Barrel-organs, and the things next door to 'em that you blow wi' your foot, have come in terribly of late years.'

'Ay!' said Bowman shaking his head; and old William on seeing him did the same thing.

'More's the pity,' replied another. 'Time was — long and merry ago now! — when not one of the varmits was to be heard of; but it served some of the quires right. They should have stuck to strings as we did, and kept out clarinets,

serpents. A deep-toned woodwind instrument about eight feet long, with three U-shaped turns.

and done away with serpents⁷. If you'd thrive in musical religion, stick to strings, says I.'

'Strings be safe soul-lifters, as far as that do go,' said Mr. Spinks.

'Yet there's worse things than serpents,' said Mr. Penny. 'Old things pass away, 'tis true; but a serpent was a good old note: a deep rich note was the serpent.'

'Clar'nets, however, be bad at all times,' said Michael Mail. 'One Christmas — years ago now, years — I went the rounds wi' the Weatherbury quire. 'Twas a hard frosty night, and the keys of all the clar'nets froze — ah, they did freeze — so that 'twas like drawing a cork every time a key was opened; and the players o' 'em had to go into a hedger-and-ditcher's chimley-corner, and thaw their clar'nets every now and then. An icicle o' spet hung down from the end of every man's clar'net a span long; and as to fingers — well, there, if ye'll believe me, we had no fingers at all, to our knowing.'

'I can well bring back to my mind,' said Mr. Penny, 'what I said to poor

Joseph Ryme (who took the treble part in Chalk-Newton Church for two-and-forty year) when they thought of having clar'nets there. "Joseph," I said says I, "depend upon't, if so be you have them tooting clar'nets you'll spoil the whole set-out. Clar'nets were not made for the service of the Lard; you can see it by looking at 'em," I said. And what came o't? Why, souls, the parson set up a barrel-organ on his own account within two years o' the time I spoke, and the old quire went to nothing.'

'As far as look is concerned,' said the tranter, 'I don't for my part see that a fiddle is much nearer heaven than a clar'net. 'Tis further off. There's always a rakish, scampish twist about a fiddle's looks that seems to say the Wicked One had a hand in making o'en; while angels be supposed to play clar'nets in heaven, or som'at like 'em if ye may believe picters.'

'Robert Penny, you was in the right,' broke in the eldest Dewy. 'They should ha' stuck to strings. Your brass-man is a rafting dog — well and good; your reed-man is a dab at stirring ye — well and good; your drum-man is a rare bowel-shaker — good again. But I don't care who hears me say it, nothing will spak to your heart wi' the sweetness o' the man of strings!'

'Strings for ever!' said little Jimmy.

'Strings alone would have held their ground against all the new comers in creation.' ('True, true!' said Bowman.) 'But clarinets was death.' ('Death they was!' said Mr. Penny.) 'And harmonions,' William continued in a louder voice, and getting excited by these signs of approval, 'harmonions and barrel-organs' ('Ah!' and groans from Spinks) 'be miserable — what shall I call 'em? — miserable —'

'Sinners,' suggested Jimmy, who made large strides like the men and did not lag behind with the other little boys.

'Miserable dumbledores!'

'Right, William, and so they be — miserable dumbledores!' said the choir with unanimity.

By this time they were crossing to a gate in the direction of the school which, standing on a slight eminence at the junction of three ways, now rose in unvarying and dark flatness against the sky. The instruments were retuned, and all the band entered the school enclosure, enjoined by old William to keep upon the grass.

'Number seventy-eight,' he softly gave out as they formed round in a semi-circle, the boys opening the lanterns to get a clearer light, and directing their rays on the books.

Then passed forth into the quiet night an ancient and time-worn hymn, embodying a quaint Christianity in words orally transmitted from father to son through several generations down to the present characters, who sang them out right earnestly:

'Remember Adam's fall,
O thou Man:
Remember Adam's fall
From Heaven to Hell.
Remember Adam's fall;
How he hath condemn'd all
In Hell perpetual
There for to dwell.

Remember God's goodnesse,
O thou Man:
Remember God's goodnesse,
His promise made.
Remember God's goodnesse;
He sent His Son sinlesse
Our ails for to redress;
Be not afraid!

In Bethlehem He was born,
 O thou Man:
 In Bethlehem He was born,
 For mankind's sake.
 In Bethlehem He was born,
 Christmas-day i' the morn:
 Our Saviour thought no scorn
 Our faults to take.

Give thanks to God away,
 O thou Man:
 Give thanks to God away
 With heart-most joy.
 Give thanks to God away
 On this our joyful day:
 Let all men sing and say,
 Holy, Holy!

Having concluded the last note they listened for a minute or two, but found that no sound issued from the school-house.

'Four breaths, and then, "O, what unbounded goodness!" number fifty-nine,' said William.

This was duly gone through, and no notice whatever seemed to be taken of the performance.

'Good guide us, surely 'tisin't a' empty

house, as befell us in the year thirty-nine and forty-three!' said old Dewy.

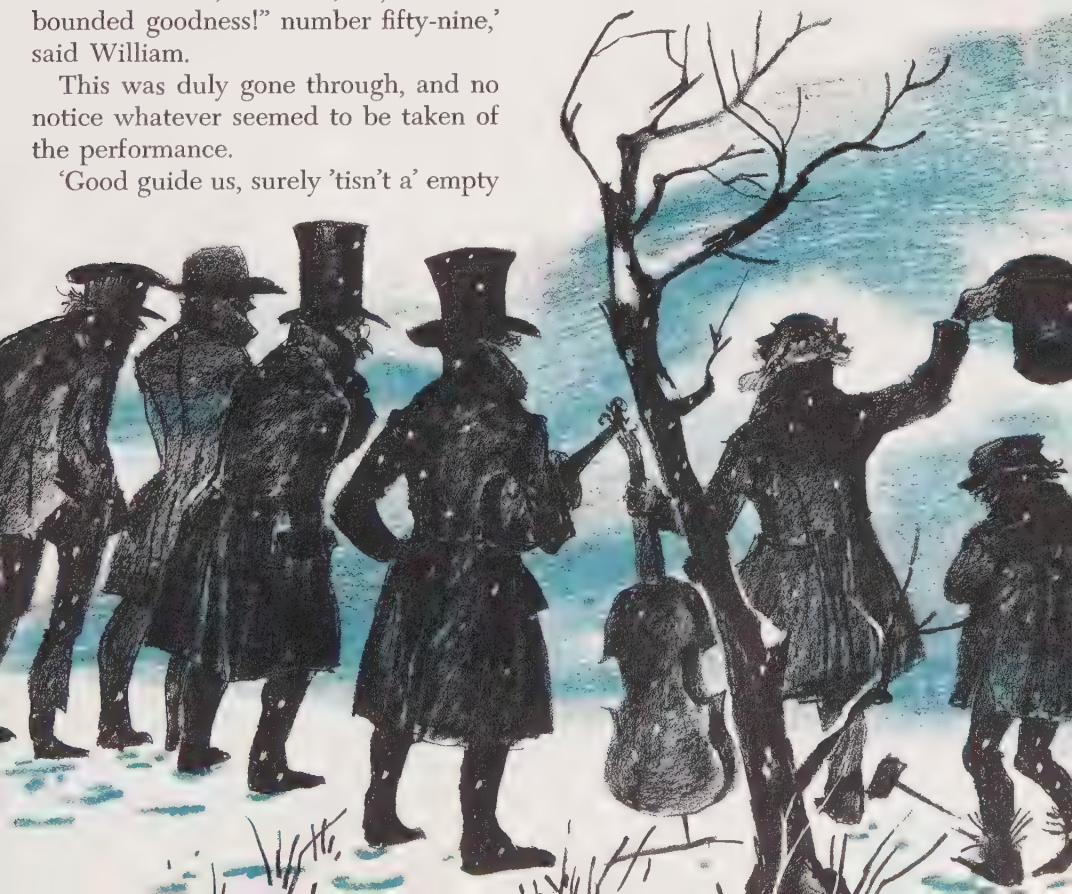
'Perhaps she's jist come from some musical city, and sneers at our doings?' the tranter whispered.

'Od rabbit her!' said Mr. Penny, with an annihilating look at a corner of the school chimney, 'I don't quite stomach her, if this is it. Your plain music well done is as worthy as your other sort done bad, a' b'lieve, souls; so say I.'

'Four breaths, and then the last,' said the leader authoritatively. 'Rejoice, ye Tenants of the Earth,' number sixty-four.'

At the close, waiting yet another minute, he said in a clear loud voice, as he had said in the village at that hour and season for the previous forty years —

'A merry Christmas to ye!'



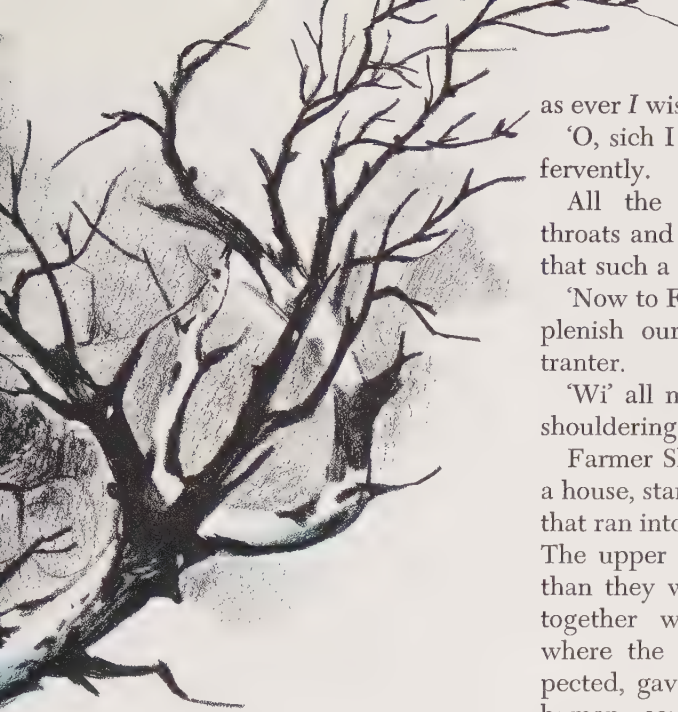
THE LISTENERS

CHAPTER V

WHEN the expectant stillness consequent upon the exclamation had nearly died out of them all, an increasing light made itself visible in one of the windows of the upper floor. It came so close to the blind that the exact position of the flame could be perceived from the outside. Remaining steady for an instant, the blind went upward from before it, revealing to thirty concentrated eyes a young girl framed as a picture by the window architrave, and unconsciously illuminating her countenance to a vivid brightness by a candle she held in her

left hand, close to her face, her right hand being extended to the side of the window. She was wrapped in a white robe of some kind, whilst down her shoulders fell a twining profusion of marvellously rich hair, in a wild disorder which proclaimed it to be only during





the invisible hours of the night that such a condition was discoverable. Her bright eyes were looking into the grey world outside with an uncertain expression, oscillating between courage and shyness, which, as she recognized the semicircular group of dark forms gathered before her, transformed itself into pleasant resolution.

Opening the window, she said lightly and warmly —

‘Thank you, singers, thank you!’

Together went the window quickly and quietly, and the blind started downward on its return to its place. Her fair forehead and eyes vanished; her little mouth; her neck and shoulders; all of her. Then the spot of candlelight shone nebulously as before; then it moved away.

‘How pretty!’ exclaimed Dick Dewy.

‘If she’d been rale wexwork she couldn’t ha’ been comelier,’ said Michael Mail.

‘As near a thing to a spiritual vision

as ever *I* wish to see!’ said tranter Dewy.

‘O, sich I never, never see!’ said Leaf fervently.

All the rest, after clearing their throats and adjusting their hats, agreed that such a sight was worth singing for.

‘Now to Farmer Shiner’s, and then replenish our insides, father?’ said the tranter.

‘Wi’ all my heart,’ said old William, shouldering his bass-viol.

Farmer Shiner’s was a queer lump of a house, standing at the corner of a lane that ran into the principal thoroughfare. The upper windows were much wider than they were high, and this feature, together with a broad bay-window where the door might have been expected, gave it by day the aspect of a human countenance turned askance, and wearing a sly and wicked leer. To-night nothing was visible but the outline of the roof upon the sky.

The front of this building was reached, and the preliminaries arranged as usual.

‘Four breaths, and number thirty-two, “Behold the Morning Star,”’ said old William.

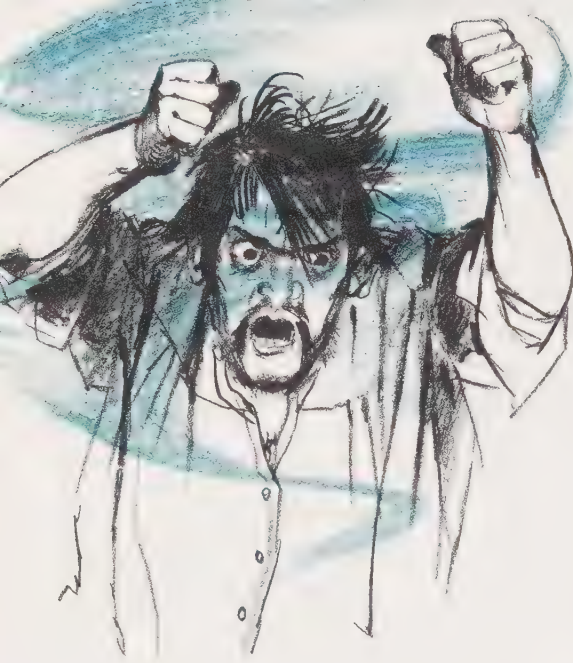
They had reached the end of the second verse, and the fiddlers were doing the up bow-stroke previously to pouring forth the opening chord of the third verse, when, without a light appearing or any signal being given a roaring voice exclaimed —

‘Shut up, woll ’ee! Don’t make your blaring row here! A feller wi’ a headache enough to split his skull likes a quiet night!’

Slam went the window.

‘Hullo, that’s a ugly blow for wel’ said the tranter, in a keenly appreciative voice, and turning to his companions.

‘Finish the carrel, all who be friends



of harmony!' commanded old William; and they continued to the end.

'Four breaths, and number nineteen!' said William firmly. 'Give it him well; the quire can't be insulted in this manner!'

A light now flashed into existence, the window opened, and the farmer stood revealed as one in a terrific passion.

'Drown en! — drown en!' the tranter cried, fiddling frantically. 'Play fortissimy, and drown his spaking!'

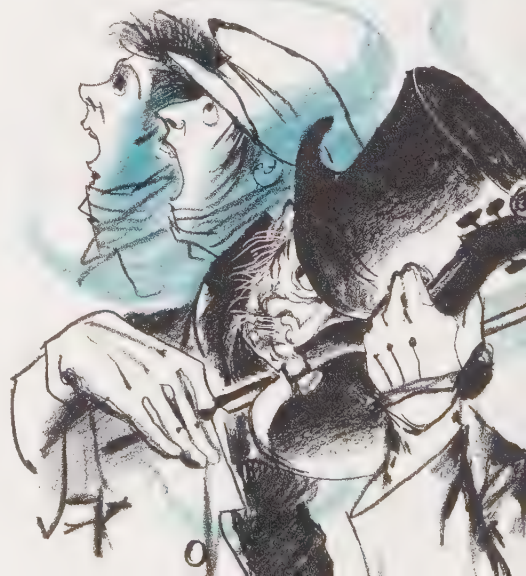
'Fortissimy!' said Michael Mail, and the music and singing waxed so loud that it was impossible to know what Mr. Shiner had said, was saying, or was about to say; but wildly flinging his arms and body about in the forms of capital Xs and Ys, he appeared to utter enough invectives to consign the whole parish to perdition.

'Very onseemly — very!' said old William, as they retired. 'Never such a dreadful scene in the whole round o' my carrel practice — never! And he a churchwarden!'

'Only a drap o' drink got into his head,' said the tranter. 'Man's well enough when he's in his religious frame. He's in his worldly frame now. Must ask en to our bit of a party to-morrow night, I suppose, and so put en in humour again. We bear no mortal man ill-will.'

They now crossed Mellstock Bridge, and went along an embowered path beside the Froom towards the church and vicarage, meeting Voss with the hot mead and bread-and-cheese as they were approaching the churchyard. This determined them to eat and drink before proceeding further, and they entered the church and ascended to the gallery. The lanterns were opened, and the whole body sat round against the walls on benches and whatever else was available, and made a hearty meal. In the pauses of conversation there could be heard through the floor overhead a little world of undertones and creaks from the halting clockwork, which never spread further than the tower they were born in, and raised in the more meditative minds a fancy that here lay the direct pathway of Time.

Having done eating and drinking they again tuned the instruments, and once



more the party emerged into the night air.

'Where's Dick?' said old Dewy.

Every man looked round upon every other man, as if Dick might have been transmuted into one or the other; and then they said they didn't know.

'Well now, that's what I call very nasty of Master Dicky, that I do,' said Michael Mail.

'He've clinked off home-along, depend upon't,' another suggested, though not quite believing that he had.

'Dick!' exclaimed the tranter, and his voice rolled sonorously forth among the yews.

He suspended his muscles rigid as stone whilst listening for an answer, and finding he listened in vain, turned to the assemblage.

'The treble man too! Now if he'd been a tenor or counter chap, we might ha' contrived the rest o't without en, you see. But for a quire to lose the treble, why, my sonnies, you may so well lose your . . .' The tranter paused, unable to mention an image vast enough for the occasion.

'Your head at once,' suggested Mr. Penny.

The tranter moved a pace as if it were puerile of people to complete sentences when there were more pressing things to be done.

'Was ever heard such a thing as a young man leaving his work half done and turning tail like this!'

'Never,' replied Bowman, in a tone signifying that he was the last man in the world to wish to withhold the formal finish required of him.

'I hope no fatal tragedy has overtaken the lad!' said his grandfather.

'O no,' replied tranter Dewy placidly. 'Wonder where he's put that there fid-

dle of his. Why, that fiddle cost thirty shillings, and good words besides. Somewhere in the damp, without doubt; that instrument will be unglued and spoilt in ten minutes — ten! ay, two.'

'What in the name o' righteousness can have happened?' said old William, more uneasily. 'Perhaps he's drowned!'

Leaving their lanterns and instruments in the belfry they retraced their steps along the waterside track. 'A strapping lad like Dick d'know better than let anything happen onawares,' Reuben remarked. 'There's sure to be some poor little scram reason for't staring us in the face all the while.' He lowered his voice to a mysterious tone: 'Neighbours, have ye noticed any sign of a scornful woman in his head, or suchlike?'

'Not a glimmer of such a body. He's as clear as water yet.'

'And Dicky said he should never marry,' cried Jimmy, 'but live at home always along wi' mother and we!'

'Ay, ay, my sonny; every lad has said that in his time.'

They had now again reached the precincts of Mr. Shiner's, but hearing nobody in that direction, one or two went across to the schoolhouse. A light was still burning in the bedroom, and though the blind was down the window had been slightly opened, as if to admit the distant notes of the carollers to the ears of the occupant of the room.

Opposite the window, leaning motionless against a beech tree, was the lost man, his arms folded, his head thrown back, his eyes fixed upon the illuminated lattice.

'Why, Dick, is that thee? What b'st doing here?'

Dick's body instantly flew into a more rational attitude, and his head was seen to turn east and west in the gloom as if



endeavouring to discern some proper answer to that question; and at last he said in rather feeble accents —

‘Nothing, father.’

‘Th’st take long enough time about it then, upon my body, said the tranter as they all turned anew towards the vicarage.

‘I thought you hadn’t done having snap in the gallery,’ said Dick.

‘Why, we’ve been traypsing and rambling about, looking everywhere, and thinking you’d done fifty deathly things, and here have you been at nothing at all!’

‘The stupidity lies in that point of it being nothing at all,’ murmured Mr. Spinks.

The vicarage front was their next field of operation, and Mr. Maybold, the lately-arrived incumbent, duly received his share of the night’s harmonies. It was hoped that by reason of his profes-

sion he would have been led to open the window, and an extra carol in quick time was added to draw him forth. But Mr. Maybold made no stir.

‘A bad sign!’ said old William, shaking his head.

However, at that same instant a musical voice was heard exclaiming from inner depths of bedclothes —

‘Thanks, villagers!’

‘What did he say?’ asked Bowman, who was rather dull of hearing. Bowman’s voice, being therefore loud, had been heard by the vicar within.

‘I said, “Thanks, villagers!”’ cried the vicar again.

‘Oh, we didn’t hear ’ee the first time!’ cried Bowman.

‘Now don’t for heaven’s sake spoil the young man’s temper by answering like that!’ said the tranter.

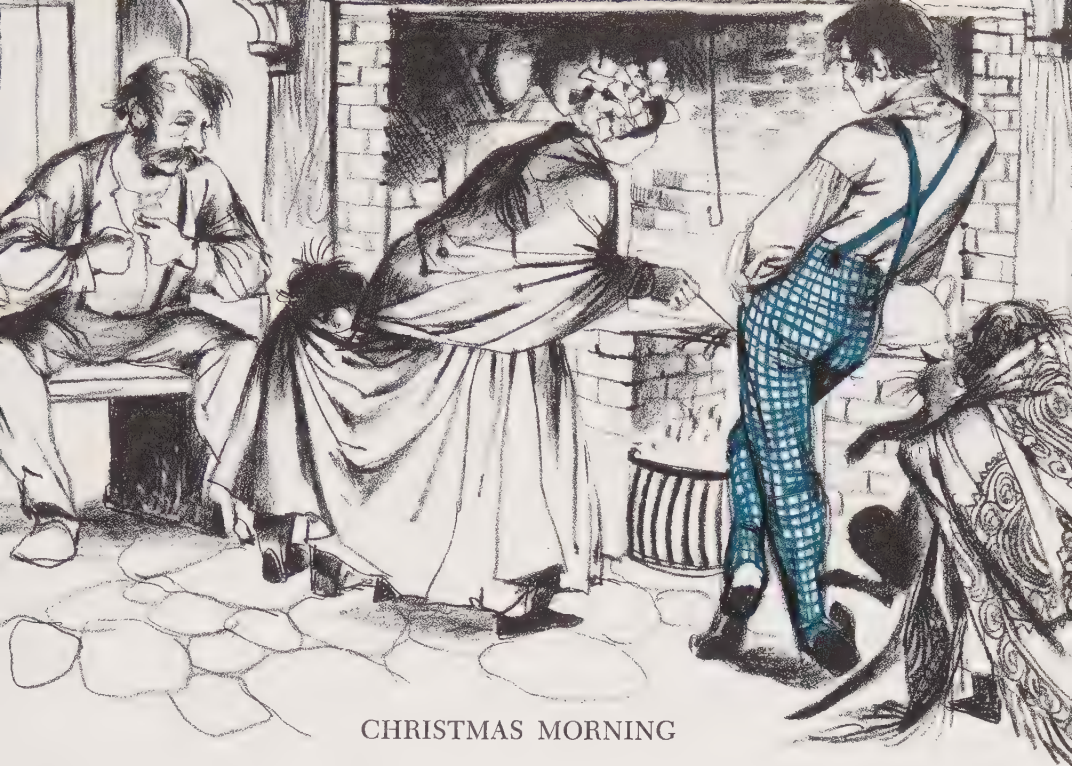
‘You won’t do that, my friends!’ the vicar shouted.

‘Well to be sure, what ears!’ said Mr. Penny in a whisper. ‘Beats any horse or dog in the parish, and depend upon’t that’s a sign he’s a proper clever chap.’

‘We shall see that in time,’ said the tranter.

Old William, in his gratitude for such thanks from a comparatively new inhabitant, was anxious to play all the tunes over again; but renounced his desire on being reminded by Reuben that it would be best to leave well alone.

‘Now putting two and two together,’ the tranter continued, as they went their way over the hill, and across to the last remaining houses; ‘that is, in the form of that young female vision we zeed just now, and this young tenor-voiced parson, my belief is she’ll wind en round her finger, and twist the pore young feller about like the figure of 8 — that she will, my sonnies.’



CHRISTMAS MORNING

CHAPTER VI

THE choir at last reached their beds, and slept like the rest of the parish. Dick's slumbers, through the three or four hours remaining for rest, were disturbed and slight; an exhaustive variation upon the incidents that had passed that night in connection with the school-window going on in his brain every moment of the time.

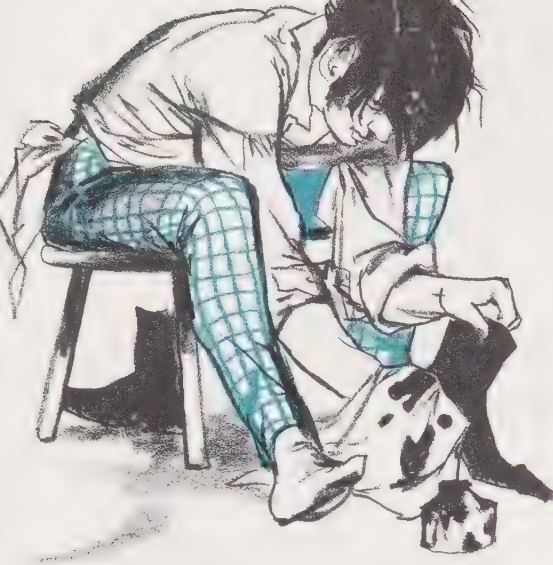
In the morning, do what he would — go upstairs, downstairs, out of doors, speak of the wind and weather, or what not — he could not refrain from an unceasing renewal, in imagination, of that interesting enactment. Tilted on the edge of one foot he stood beside the fireplace, watching his mother grilling rashers; but there was nothing in grilling, he thought, unless the Vision grilled. The limp rasher hung down between the bars of the gridiron like a cat in a child's arms; but there was

nothing in similes unless She uttered them. He looked at the daylight shadows of a yellow hue, dancing with the firelight shadows in blue on the white-washed chimney corner, but there was nothing in shadows. 'Perhaps the new young wom — sch — Miss Fancy Day will sing in church with us this morning,' he said.

The tranter looked a long time before he replied, 'I fancy she will; and yet I fancy she won't.'

Dick implied that such a remark was rather to be tolerated than admired; though deliberateness in speech was known to have, as a rule, more to do with the machinery of the tranter's throat than with the matter enunciated.

They made preparations for going to church as usual; Dick with extreme alacrity, though he would not definitely consider why he was so religious. His



wonderful nicety in brushing and cleaning his best light boots had features which elevated it to the rank of an art. Every particle and speck of last week's mud was scraped and brushed from toe and heel; new blacking from the packet was carefully mixed and made use of, regardless of expense. A coat was laid on and polished; then another coat for increased blackness; and lastly a third, to give the perfect and mirror-like jet which the hoped-for rencounter demanded.



It being Christmas-day, the tranter prepared himself with Sunday particularity. Loud sousing and snorting noises were heard to proceed from a tub in the back quarters of the dwelling, proclaiming that he was there performing his great Sunday wash, lasting half-an-hour, to which his washings on working-day mornings were mere flashes in the pan. Vanishing into the outhouse with a large brown towel, and the above-named bubblings and snortings being carried on for about twenty minutes, the tranter would appear round the edge of the door, smelling like a summer fog, and looking as if he had just narrowly escaped a watery grave with the loss of much of his clothes, having since been weeping bitterly till his eyes were red; a crystal drop of water hanging ornamentally at the bottom of each ear, one at the tip of his nose, and others in the form of spangles about his hair.

After a great deal of crunching upon the sanded stone floor by the feet of father, son, and grandson as they moved to and fro in these preparations, the bass-viol and fiddles were taken from their nook, and the strings examined and screwed a little above concert-pitch, that they might keep their tone when the service began, to obviate the awkward contingency of having to retune them at the back of the gallery during a cough, sneeze, or amen — an inconvenience which had been known to arise in damp wintry weather.

The three left the door and paced down Mellstock-Lane and across the ewe-lease, bearing under their arms the instruments in faded green-baize bags, and old brown music-books in their hands; Dick continually finding himself in advance of the other two, and the

tranter moving on with toes turned outwards to an enormous angle.

At the foot of an incline the church became visible through the north gate, or 'church hatch,' as it was called here. Seven agile figures in a clump were observable beyond, which proved to be the choristers waiting; sitting on an altar-tomb to pass the time, and letting their heels dangle against it. The musicians being now in sight the youthful party scampered off and rattled up the old wooden stairs of the gallery like a regiment of cavalry; the other boys of the parish waiting outside and observing birds, cats, and other creatures till the vicar entered, when they suddenly subsided into sober church-goers, and passed down the aisle with echoing heels.

The gallery of Mellstock Church had a status and sentiment of its own. A stranger there was regarded with a feeling altogether differing from that of the congregation below towards him. Banished from the nave as an intruder whom no originality could make interesting, he was received above as a curiosity that no unfitness could render dull. The gallery, too, looked down upon and knew the habits of the nave to its remotest peculiarity, and had an extensive stock of exclusive information about it; whilst the nave knew nothing of the gallery folk, as gallery folk, beyond their loud-sounding minims and chest notes. Such topics as that the clerk was always chewing tobacco except at the moment of crying amen; that he had a dust-hole in his pew; that during the sermon certain young daughters of the village had left off caring to

read anything so mild as the marriage service for some years, and now regularly studied the one which chronologically follows it; that a pair of lovers touched fingers through a knot-hole between their pews in the manner ordained by their great exemplars, Pyramus and Thisbe^a; that Mrs. Ledlow, the farmer's wife, counted her money and reckoned her week's marketing expenses during the first lesson — all news to those below — were stale subjects here.

Old William sat in the centre of the front row, his violoncello between his knees and two singers on each hand. Behind him, on the left, came the treble singers and Dick; and on the right the tranter and the tenors. Further back was old Mail with the altos and supernumeraries.

But before they had taken their places, and whilst they were standing in a circle at the back of the gallery practising a psalm or two, Dick cast his eyes over his grandfather's shoulder, and saw the vision of the past night enter the porch-door as methodically as if she had never been a vision at all. A new atmosphere seemed suddenly to be puffed into the ancient edifice by her movement, which made Dick's body and soul tingle with novel sensations. Directed by Shiner, the churchwarden, she proceeded to the small aisle on the north side of the chancel, a spot now allotted to a throng of Sunday-school girls, and distinctly visible from the gallery-front by looking under the curve of the furthest arch on that side.

Before this moment the church had seemed comparatively empty — now it was thronged; and as Miss Fancy rose from her knees and looked around her for a permanent place in which

^a*Pyramus and Thisbe*. Legendary lovers, forbidden by their parents to see each other, conversed through a hole in the garden wall.

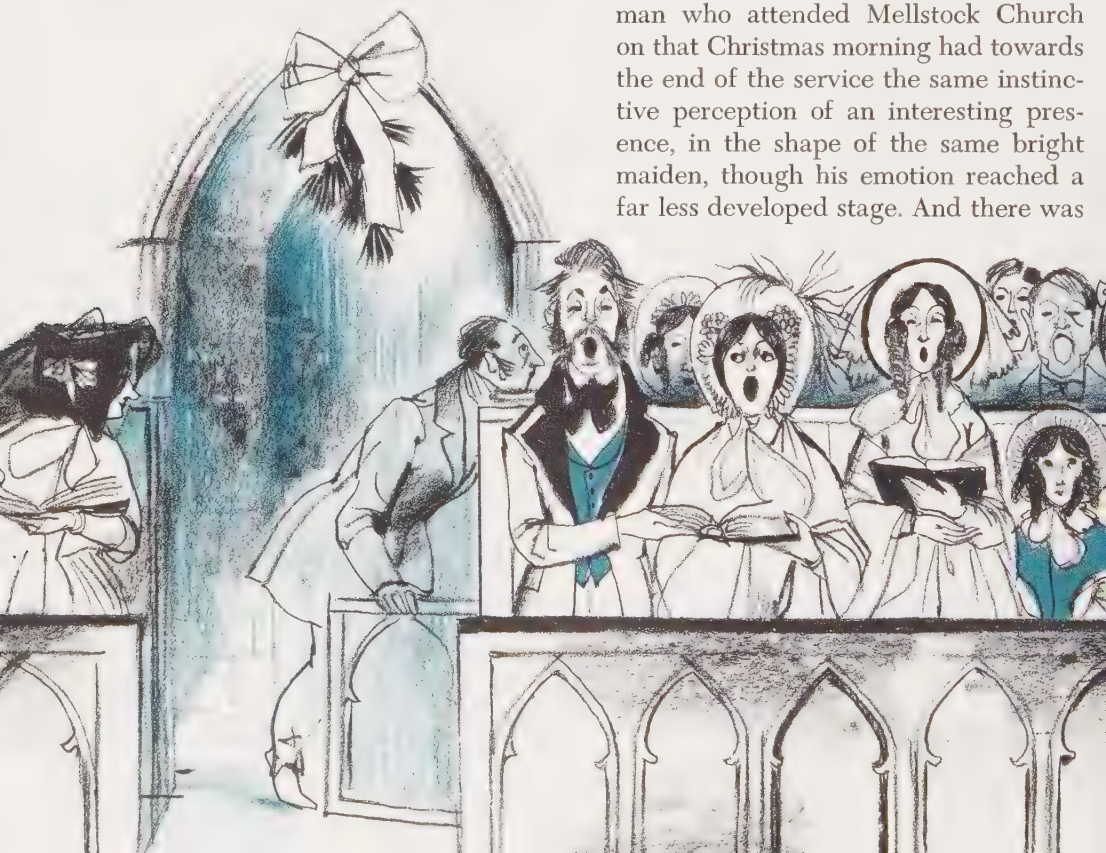
to deposit herself — finally choosing the remotest corner — Dick began to breathe more freely the warm new air she had brought with her; to feel rushings of blood, and to have impressions that there was a tie between her and himself visible to all the congregation.

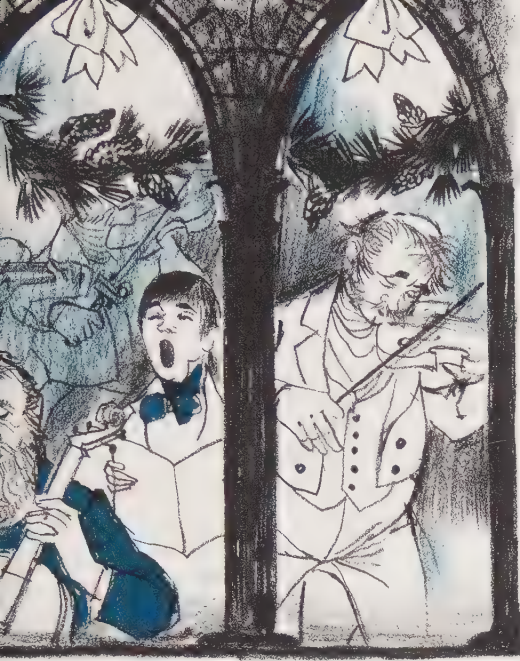
Ever afterwards the young man could recollect individually each part of the service of that bright Christmas morning, and the trifling occurrences which took place as its minutes slowly drew along; the duties of that day dividing themselves by a complete line from the services of other times. The tunes they that morning essayed remained with him for years, apart from all others; also the text; also the appearance of the layer of dust upon the capitals of the piers; that the holly-bough in the chancel archway was hung a little out of the centre — all the ideas,



in short, that creep into the mind when reason is only exercising its lowest activity through the eye.

By chance or by fate, another young man who attended Mellstock Church on that Christmas morning had towards the end of the service the same instinctive perception of an interesting presence, in the shape of the same bright maiden, though his emotion reached a far less developed stage. And there was





this difference, too, that the person in question was surprised at his condition, and sedulously endeavoured to reduce himself to his normal state of mind. He was the young vicar, Mr. Maybold.

The music on Christmas mornings was frequently below the standard of church-performances at other times. The boys were sleepy from the heavy exertions of the night; the men were slightly wearied; and now, in addition

to these constant reasons, there was a dampness in the atmosphere that still further aggravated the evil. Their strings, from the recent long exposure to the night air, rose whole semitones, and snapped with a loud twang at the most silent moment; which necessitated more retiring than ever to the back of the gallery, and made the gallery throats quite husky with the quantity of coughing and hemming required for tuning in. The vicar looked cross.

When the singing was in progress there was suddenly discovered to be a strong and shrill reinforcement from some point, ultimately found to be the school-girls' aisle. At every attempt it grew bolder and more distinct. At the third time of singing, these intrusive feminine voices were as mighty as those of the regular singers; in fact, the flood of sound from this quarter assumed



such an individuality, that it had a time, a key, almost a tune of its own, surging upwards when the gallery plunged downwards, and the reverse.

Now this had never happened before within the memory of man. The girls, like the rest of the congregation, had always been humble and respectful followers of the gallery; singing at sixes and sevens if without gallery leaders; never interfering with the ordinances of these practised artists — having no will, union, power, or proclivity except it was given them from the established choir enthroned above them.



A good deal of desperation became noticeable in the gallery throats and strings, which continued throughout the musical portion of the service. Directly the fiddles were laid down, Mr. Penny's spectacles put in their sheath, and the text had been given out, an indignant whispering began.

'Did ye hear that, souls?' Mr. Penny said, in a groaning breath.

'Brazen-faced hussies!' said Bowman.

'True; why, they were every note as loud as we, fiddles and all, if not louder!'

'Fiddles and all!' echoed Bowman bitterly.

'Shall anything saucier be found than united 'ooman?' Mr. Spinks murmured.

'What I want to know is,' said the tranter (as if he knew already, but that civilization required the form of words), 'what business people have to tell maidens to sing like that when they don't sit in a gallery, and never have entered one in their lives? That's the question, my sonnies.'

'Tis the gallery have got to sing, all the world knows,' said Mr. Penny. 'Why, souls, what's the use o' the ancients spending scores of pounds to build galleries if people down in the lowest depths of the church sing like that at a moment's notice?'

'Really, I think we useless ones had better march out of church, fiddles and all!' said Mr. Spinks, with a laugh which, to a stranger, would have sounded mild and real. Only the initiated body of men he addressed could understand the horrible bitterness of irony that lurked under the quiet words 'useless ones', and the ghastliness of the laughter apparently so natural.

'Never mind! Let 'em sing too — 'twill

make it all the louder — hee, heel' said Leaf.

'Thomas Leaf, Thomas Leaf! Where have you lived all your life?' said grandfather William sternly.

The quailing Leaf tried to look as if he had lived nowhere at all.

'When all's said and done, my sonnies,' Reuben said, 'there'd have been no real harm in their singing if they had let nobody hear 'em, and only jined in now and then.'

'None at all,' said Mr. Penny. 'But though I don't wish to accuse people wrongfully, I'd say before my lord judge that I could hear every note o' that last psalm come from 'em as much as from us — every note as if 'twas their own.'

'Know it! ah, I should think I did know it!' Mr. Spinks was heard to observe at this moment without reference to his fellow-players — shaking his head at some idea he seemed to see floating before him, and smiling as if he were attending a funeral at the time. 'Ah, do I or don't I know it!'

No one said 'Know what?' because all were aware from experience that what he knew would declare itself in process of time.

'I could fancy last night that we

should have some trouble wi' that young man,' said the tranter, pending the continuance of Spinks's speech, and looking towards the unconscious Mr. Maybold in the pulpit.

'I fancy,' said old William, rather severely, 'I fancy there's too much whispering going on to be of any spiritual use to gentle or simple.' Then folding his lips and concentrating his glance on the vicar, he implied that none but the ignorant would speak again; and accordingly there was silence in the gallery, Mr. Spinks's telling speech remaining for ever unspoken.

Dick had said nothing, and the tranter little, on this episode of the morning; for Mrs. Dewy at breakfast expressed it as her intention to invite the youthful leader of the culprits to the small party it was customary with them to have on Christmas night — a piece of knowledge which had given a particular brightness to Dick's reflections since he had received it. And in the tranter's slightly cynical nature, party feeling was weaker than in the other members of the choir, though friendliness and faithful partnership still sustained in him a hearty earnestness on their account.

Discussion

1. Explain briefly the significance of the chapter titles.
2. What clues foreshadow the end of instrumental choirs in churches?
3. What reception do the musicians get from (a) the new teacher, (b) Farmer Shiner, (c) the new vicar?
4. What prediction does the tranter make in regard to the two newcomers to the parish?
5. What is the significance of Dick's preparation for church?
6. Explain the comment that the gallery of Mellstock Church had "an extensive stock of exclusive information."



THE TRANTER'S PARTY

CHAPTER VII

DURING the afternoon unusual activity was seen to prevail about the precincts of tranter Dewy's house. The flagstone floor was swept of dust, and a sprinkling of the finest yellow sand from the innermost stratum of the adjoining sand-pit lightly scattered thereupon. Then were produced large knives and forks, which had been shrouded in darkness and grease since the last occasion of the kind, and bearing upon their sides, 'Shear-steel, warranted,' in such emphatic letters of assurance, that the warranter's name was not required as further proof, and not given. The key was left in the tap of the cider-barrel instead of being carried in a pocket. And finally the tranter had to stand up in the room and let his wife wheel him round like a turnstile, to see if anything discreditable was visible in his appearance.

'Stand still till I've been for the scissors,' said Mrs. Dewy.

The tranter stood as still as a sentinel at the challenge.

The only repairs necessary were a trimming of one or two whiskers that had extended beyond the general contour of the mass; a like trimming of a slightly-frayed edge visible on his shirt-collar; and a final tug at a grey hair — to all of which operations he submit-



ted in resigned silence, except the last, which produced a mild 'Come, come, Ann,' by way of expostulation.

'Really, Reuben, 'tis quite a disgrace to see such a man,' said Mrs. Dewy, with the severity justifiable in a long-tried companion, giving him another turn round, and picking several of Smiler's hairs from the shoulder of his coat. Reuben's thoughts seemed engaged elsewhere, and he yawned. 'And the collar of your coat is a shame to behold — so plastered with dirt, or dust, or grease, or something. Why, wherever could you have got it?'

''Tis my warm nater in summer-time, I suppose. I always did get in such a heat when I bustle about.'



asked ye to jine us. That's how it was, I suppose.' But the tranter appeared to have heard some such words from his wife before, and hence his answer had not the energy it might have shown if the inquiry had possessed the charm of novelty.

'You never did look so well in a pair o' trousers as in them,' she continued in the same unimpassioned voice, so that the unfriendly criticism of the Dewy family seemed to have been more normal than spontaneous. 'Such a cheap pair as 'twas too. As big as any man could wish to have, and lined inside, and double-lined in the lower parts, and an extra piece of stiffening at the bottom. And 'tis a nice high cut that comes up right under your armpits, and there's enough turned down inside the seams to make half a pair more, besides a piece of cloth left that will make an honest waistcoat — all by my contriving in buying the stuff at a bargain, and having it made up under my eye. It only shows what may be done by taking a little trouble, and not going straight to the rascally tailors.'

'Ay, the Dewys always were such a coarse-skinned family. There's your brother Bob just as bad — as fat as a porpoise — wi' his low, mean, "How'st do, Ann?" whenever he meets me. I'd "How'st do" him indeed! If the sun only shines out a minute, there be you all streaming in the face — I never see!'

'If I be hot week-days, I must be hot Sundays.'

'If any of the girls should turn after their father 'twill be a bad look-out for 'em, poor things! None of my family was sich vulgar sweaters, not one of 'em. But, Lord-a-mercy, the Dewys! I don't know how ever I cam' into such a family!'

'Your woman's weakness when I

The discourse was cut short by the sudden appearance of Charley on the scene, with a face and hands of hideous blackness, and a nose like a guttering candle. Why, on that particularly cleanly afternoon, he should have discovered that the chimney-crook and chain from which the hams were suspended should have possessed more merits and general interest as playthings than any other articles in the house, is a question for nursing mothers to decide. However, the humour seemed to lie in the result being, as has been seen, that any given player with these articles was in the long-run daubed with soot. The last that was

seen of Charley by daylight after this piece of ingenuity was when in the act of vanishing from his father's presence round the corner of the house — looking back over his shoulder with an expression of great sin on his face, like Cain as the Outcast in Bible pictures.

The guests had all assembled, and the tranter's party had reached that degree of development which accords with ten o'clock P.M. in rural assemblies. At that hour the sound of a fiddle in process of tuning was heard from the inner pantry.

'That's Dick,' said the tranter. 'That lad's crazy for a jig.'

'Dick! Now I cannot — really, I cannot have any dancing at all till Christmas-day is out,' said old William emphatically. 'When the clock ha' done striking twelve, dance as much as ye like.'

'Well, I must say there's reason in that, William,' said Mrs. Penny. 'If you do have a party on Christmas-night, 'tis only fair and honourable to the sky-folk to have it a sit-still party. Jigging parties be all very well on the Devil's holidays; but a jigging party looks suspicious now. O yes; stop till the clock strikes, young folk — so say I.'

It happened that some warm mead accidentally got into Mr. Spinks's head about this time.

'Dancing,' he said, 'is a most strengthening, livening, and courting movement, 'specially with a little beverage added! And dancing is good. But why disturb what is ordained, Richard and Reuben, and the company zhinerally? Why, I ask, as far as that do go?'

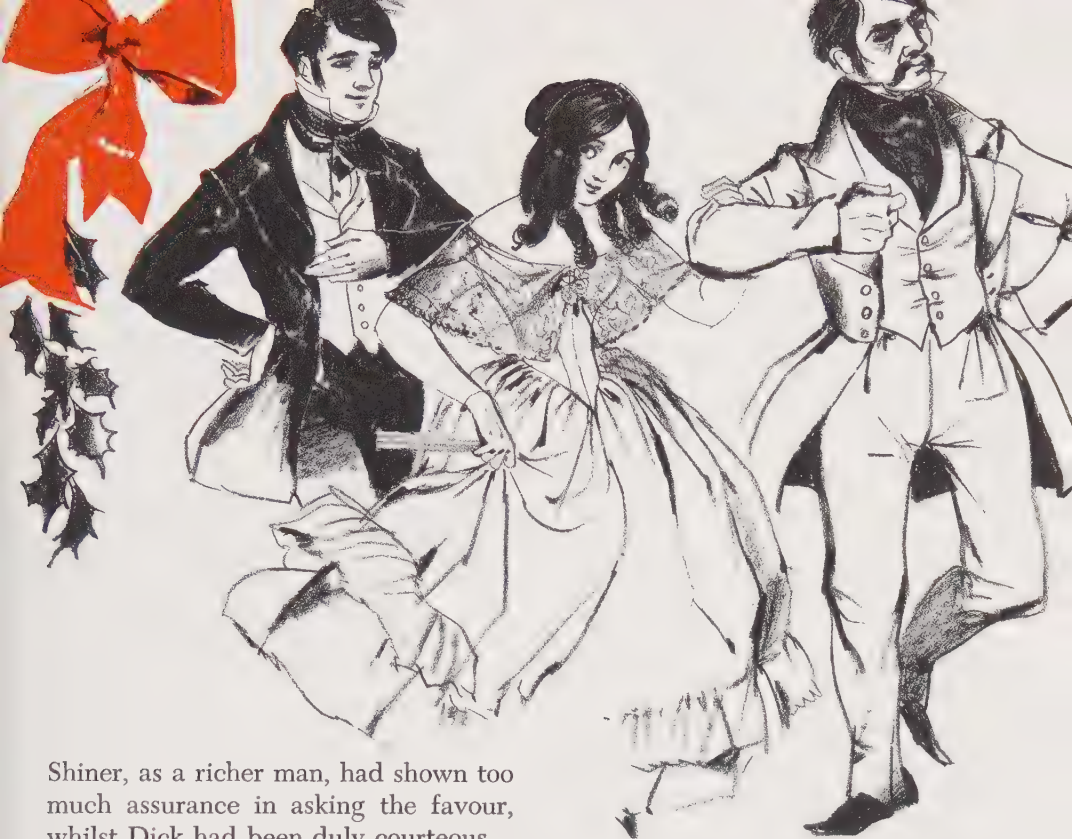
'Then nothing till after twelve,' said William.

Though Reuben and his wife ruled

on social points, religious questions were mostly disposed of by the old man, whose firmness on this head quite counterbalanced a certain weakness in his handling of domestic matters. The hopes of the younger members of the household were therefore relegated to a distance of one hour and three-quarters — a result that took visible shape in them by a remote and listless look about the eyes — the singing of songs being permitted in the interim.

At five minutes to twelve the soft tuning was again heard in the back quarters; and when at length the clock had whizzed forth the last stroke, Dick appeared ready primed, and the instruments were boldly handled; old William very readily taking the bass-viol from its accustomed nail, and touching the strings as irreligiously as could be desired.

The country-dance called the 'Triumph, or Follow my Lover', was the figure with which they opened. The tranter took for his partner Mrs. Penny, and Mrs. Dewy was chosen by Mr. Penny, who made so much of his limited height by a judicious carriage of the head, straightening of the back, and important flashes of his spectacle-glasses, that he seemed almost as tall as the tranter. Mr. Shiner, age about thirty-five, farmer and churchwarden, a character principally composed of a crimson stare, vigorous breath, and a watch-chain, with a mouth hanging on a dark smile but never smiling, had come quite willingly to the party, and showed a wondrous obliviousness of all his antics on the previous night. But the comely, slender, prettily-dressed prize Fancy Day fell to Dick's lot, in spite of some private machinations of the farmer, for the reason that Mr.



Shiner, as a richer man, had shown too much assurance in asking the favour, whilst Dick had been duly courteous.

We gain a good view of our heroine as she advances to her place in the ladies' line. She belonged to the taller division of middle height. Flexibility was her first characteristic, by which she appeared to enjoy the most easeful rest when she was in gliding motion. Her dark eyes — arched by brows of so keen, slender, and soft a curve that they resembled nothing so much as two slurs in music — showed primarily a bright sparkle each. This was softened by a frequent thoughtfulness, yet not so frequent as to do away, for more than a few minutes at a time, with a certain coquettishness; which in its turn was never so decided as to banish honesty. Her lips imitated her brows in their clearly-cut outline and softness of bend; and her nose was well shaped — which is saying a great deal, when it is

remembered that there are a hundred pretty mouths and eyes for one pretty nose. Add to this, plentiful knots of dark-brown hair, a gauzy dress of white with blue facings; and the slightest idea may be gained of the young maiden who showed, amidst the rest of the dancing-ladies, like a flower among vegetables. And so the dance proceeded. Mr. Shiner, according to the interesting rule laid down, deserted his own partner and made off down the middle with this fair one of Dick's — the pair appearing from the top of the room like two persons tripping down a lane to be married. Dick trotted behind with what was intended to be a look of composure, but which was, in fact, a rather silly expression of feature — implying, with too much earnestness, that such an elopement could not be

tolerated. Then they turned and came back, when Dick grew more rigid around his mouth, and blushed with ingenuous ardour as he joined hands with the rival and formed the arch over his lady's head, which presumably gave the figure its name; relinquishing her again at setting to partners, when Mr. Shiner's new chain quivered in every link, and all the loose flesh upon the tranter — who here came into action again — shook like jelly. Mrs. Penny, being always rather concerned for her personal safety when she danced with the tranter, fixed her face to a chronic smile of timidity the whole time

it lasted — a peculiarity which filled her features with wrinkles, and reduced her eyes to little straight lines like hyphens, as she jigged up and down opposite him; repeating in her own person not only his proper movements, but also the minor flourishes which the richness of the tranter's imagination led him to introduce from time to time — an imitation which had about it something of



slavish obedience, not unmixed with fear.

The ear-rings of the ladies now flung themselves wildly about, turning violent summersaults, banging this way

and that, and then swinging quietly against the ears sustaining them. Mrs. Crumpler — a heavy woman, who, for some reason which nobody ever thought worth inquiry, danced in a clean apron — moved so smoothly through the fig-

the faces even of delicate girls — a ghastly dew having for some time rained from the features of their masculine partners; when skirts begin to be torn out of their gathers; when elderly people, who have stood up to please their juniors, begin to feel sundry small tremblings in the region of the knees, and to wish the interminable dance was at Jericho; when (at country parties of the thorough sort) waistcoats begin to be unbuttoned, and when the fiddlers'



ure that her feet were never seen; conveying to imaginative minds the idea that she rolled on castors.

Minute after minute glided by, and the party reached the period when ladies' back-hair begins to look forgotten and dissipated; when a perceptible dampness makes itself apparent upon

chairs have been wriggled, by the frantic bowing of their occupiers, to a distance of about two feet from where they originally stood.

Fancy was dancing with Mr. Shiner. Dick knew that Fancy, by the law of good manners, was bound to dance as pleasantly with one partner as with another; yet he could not help suggesting to himself that she need not have put *quite* so much spirit into her steps, nor smiled *quite* so frequently whilst in the farmer's hands.

'I'm afraid you didn't cast off,' said Dick mildly to Mr. Shiner, before the latter man's watch-chain had done vibrating from a recent whirl.

Fancy made a motion of accepting the correction; but her partner took no notice, and proceeded with the next movement with an affectionate bend towards her.

'That Shiner's too fond of her,' the young man said to himself as he watched them. They came to the top again, Fancy smiling warmly towards her partner, and went to their places.

'Mr. Shiner, you didn't cast off,' said Dick, for want of something else to demolish him with; casting off himself, and being put out at the farmer's irregularity.

'Perhaps I shan't cast off for any man,' said Mr. Shiner.

'I think you ought to, sir.'

Dick's partner, a young lady of the name of Lizzy — called Lizz for short — tried to mollify.

'I can't say that I myself have much feeling for casting off,' she said.

'Nor I,' said Mrs. Penny, following up the argument; 'especially if a friend and neighbour is set against it. Not but that 'tis a terrible tasty thing in good hands and well done; yes, indeed, so say I.'

'All I meant was,' said Dick, rather sorry that he had spoken correctly to a guest, 'that 'tis in the dance; and a man has hardly any right to hack and mangle what was ordained by the regular dance-maker, who, I daresay, got his living by making 'em, and thought of nothing else all his life.'

'I don't like casting off: then very well; I cast off for no dance-maker that ever lived.'

Dick now appeared to be doing mental arithmetic, the act being really an effort to present to himself, in an abstract form, how far an argument with a formidable rival ought to be carried when that rival was his mother's guest. The dead-lock was put an end to by the stamping arrival up the middle of the tranter, who, despising minutiae on principle, started a theme of his own.

'I assure you, neighbours,' he said, 'the heat of my frame no tongue can tell!' He looked around and endeavoured to give, by a forcible gaze of self-sympathy, some faint idea of the truth.

Mrs. Dewy formed one of the next couple.

'Yes,' she said in an auxiliary tone, 'Reuben always was such a hot man.'

Mrs. Penny implied the species of sympathy that such a class of affliction required by trying to smile and to look grieved at the same time.

'If he only walk round the garden of a Sunday morning his shirt-collar is as limp as no starch at all,' continued Mrs. Dewy, her countenance lapsing parenthetically into a housewifely expression of concern at the reminiscence.

'Come, come, you women-folk; 'tis hands-across — come, come!' said the tranter; and the conversation ceased for the present.



THEY DANCE MORE WILDLY

CHAPTER VIII

DICK had at length secured Fancy for that most delightful of country-dances, opening with six-hands-round.

'Before we begin,' said the tranter, 'my proposal is, that 'twould be a right and proper plan for every mortal man in the dance to pull off his jacket, considering the heat.'

'Such low notions as you have, Reuben! Nothing but strip will go down with you when you are a-dancing. Such a hot man as he is!'

'Well, now, look here, my sonnies,' he argued to his wife, whom he often addressed in the plural masculine for economy of epithet merely; 'I don't see that. You dance and get hot as fire; therefore you lighten your clothes. Isn't that nature and reason for gentle and simple? If I strip by myself and not necessary, 'tis rather pot-housey I own; but if we stout chaps strip one and all, why, 'tis the native manners of the country,

which no man can gainsay? Hey — what did you say, my sonnies?'

'Strip we will!' said the three other heavy men who were in the dance; and their coats were accordingly taken off and hung in the passage, whence the four sufferers from heat soon reappeared marching in close column, with flapping shirt-sleeves, and having as common to them all a general glance of being now a match for any man or dancer in England or Ireland. Dick, fearing to lose ground in Fancy's good opinion, retained his coat like the rest of the thinner men; and Mr. Shiner did the same from superior knowledge.

And now a further phase of revelry had disclosed itself. It was the time of night when a guest may write his name in the dust upon the tables and chairs, and a bluish mist pervades the atmosphere, becoming a distinct halo round the candles; when people's nostrils,

wrinkles, and crevices in general seem to be getting gradually plastered up; when the very fiddlers as well as the dancers get red in the face, the dancers having advanced further still towards incandescence, and entered the cadaverous phase; the fiddlers no longer sit down, but kick back their chairs and saw madly at the strings with legs firmly spread and eyes closed, regardless of the visible world. Again and again did Dick share his Love's hand with another man, and wheel round; then, more delightfully, promenaded in a circle with her all to himself, his arm holding her waist more firmly each time, and his elbow getting further and further behind her back, till the distance reached was rather noticeable; and, most blissful, swinging to places shoulder to shoulder, her breath curling round his neck like a summer zephyr that had strayed from its proper date. Threading the couples one by one they reached the bottom, when there arose in Dick's mind a minor misery lest the tune should end before they could work their way to the top again, and have anew the same exciting run down through. Dick's feelings on actually reaching the top in spite of his doubts were supplemented by a mortal fear that the fiddling might even stop at this supreme moment; which prompted him to convey a stealthy whisper to the far-gone musicians to the effect that they were not to leave off till he and his partner had reached the bottom of the dance once more, which remark was replied to by the nearest of those convulsed and quivering men by a private nod to the anxious young man between two semiquavers of the tune, and a simultaneous 'All right, ay, ay,' without opening the eyes. Fancy was now held so closely that Dick and she were prac-



tically one person. The room became to Dick like a picture in a dream; all that he could remember of it afterwards being the look of the fiddlers going to sleep as humming-tops sleep, by increasing their motion and hum, together with the figures of grandfather James and old Simon Crumpler sitting by the chimney-corner talking and nodding in dumb-show, and beating the air to their emphatic sentences like people near a threshing machine.

The dance ended. 'Piph-h-h-h!' said tranter Dewy, blowing out his breath in the very finest stream of vapour that a man's lips could form. 'A regular tight-

ener, that one, sonnies!' He wiped his forehead, and went to the cider and ale mugs on the table.

'Well!' said Mrs. Penny, flopping into a chair, 'my heart haven't been in such a thumping state of uproar since I used to sit up on old Midsummer-eves to see who my husband was going to be.'

'And that's getting on for a good few years ago now, from what I've heard you tell,' said the tranter without lifting his eyes from the cup he was filling. Being now engaged in the business of handing round refreshments he was warranted in keeping his coat off still, though the other heavy men had resumed theirs.

'And a thing I never expected would come to pass, if you'll believe me, came to pass then,' continued Mrs. Penny. 'Ah, the first spirit ever I see on a Midsummer-eve was a puzzle to me when he appeared, a hard puzzle, so say I!'

'So I should have fancied,' said Elias Spinks.

'Yes,' said Mrs. Penny, throwing her glance into past times and talking on in a running tone of complacent abstraction, as if a listener were not a necessity. 'Yes; never was I in such a taking as on that Midsummer-eve! I sat up, quite determined to see if John Wildway was going to marry me or no. I put the bread-and-cheese and beer quite ready, as the witch's book ordered, and I opened the door, and I waited till the clock struck twelve, my nerves all alive and so strained that I could feel every one of 'em twitching like bell-wires. Yes, sure! and when the clock had struck, lo and behold I could see through the door a *little small* man in the lane wi' a shoemaker's apron on.'

Here Mr. Penny stealthily enlarged himself half an inch.

'Now, John Wildway,' Mrs. Penny continued, 'who courted me at that time, was a shoemaker, you see, but he was a very fair-sized man, and I couldn't believe that any such a little small man had anything to do wi' me, as anybody might. But on he came, and crossed the threshold — not John, but actually the same little small man in the shoemaker's apron —'

'You needn't be so mighty particular about little and small!' said her husband.

'In he walks, and down he sits, and O my goodness me, didn't I flee upstairs, body and soul hardly hanging together! Well, to cut a long story short, by-long and by-late John Wildway and I had a miff and parted; and lo and behold, the coming man came! Penny asked me if I'd go snacks with him, and afore I knew what I was about a'most, the thing was done.'

'I've fancied you never knew better in your life; but I mid be mistaken,' said Mr. Penny in a murmur.

After Mrs. Penny had spoken, there being no new occupation for her eyes she still let them stay idling on the past scenes just related, which were apparently visible to her in the centre of the room. Mr. Penny's remark received no reply.

During this discourse the tranter and his wife might have been observed standing in an unobtrusive corner in mysterious closeness to each other, a just perceptible current of intelligence passing from each to each, which had apparently no relation whatever to the conversation of their guests, but much to their sustenance. A conclusion of some kind having at length been drawn, the palpable confederacy of man and wife was once more obliterated, the tranter marching off into the pantry

humming a tune that he couldn't quite recollect, and then breaking into the words of a song of which he could remember about one line and a quarter. Mrs. Dewy spoke a few words about preparations for a bit of supper.

That elder portion of the company which loved eating and drinking put on a look to signify that till this moment they had quite forgotten that it was customary to expect suppers on these occasions; going even further than this politeness of feature, and starting irrelevant subjects, the exceeding flatness and forced tone of which rather betrayed their object. The younger members said they were quite hungry, and that supper would be delightful though it was so late.

Good luck attended Dick's love-passes during the meal. He sat next Fancy, and had the thrilling pleasure of using permanently a glass which had been taken by Fancy in mistake; of letting the outer edge of the sole of his boot touch the lower verge of her skirt; and to add to these delights the cat, which had lain unobserved in her lap for several minutes, crept across into his own, touching him with fur that had touched her hand a moment before. There were, besides, some little pleasures in the shape of helping her to vegetable she didn't want, and when it had nearly alighted on her plate taking it across for his own use, on the plea of waste not, want not. He also, from time to time, sipped sweet sly glances at her profile; noticing the set of her head, the curve of her throat, and other artistic properties of the lively goddess, who the while kept up a rather free, not to say too free, conversation with Mr. Shiner sitting opposite; which, after some uneasy criticism, and much shifting of argument backwards and for-

wards in Dick's mind, he decided not to consider of alarming significance.

'A new music greets our ears now,' said Miss Fancy, alluding, with the sharpness that her position as village sharpener demanded, to the contrast between the rattle of knives and forks and the late notes of the fiddlers.

'Ay; and I don't know but what 'tis sweeter in tone when you get above forty,' said the tranter; 'except, in faith, as regards father there. Never such a mortal man as he for tunes. They do move his soul; don't 'em, father?'

The eldest Dewy smiled across from his distant chair an assent to Reuben's remark.

'Spaking of being moved in soul,' said Mr. Penny, 'I shall never forget the first



time I heard the "Dead March". 'Twas at poor Corp'l Nineman's funeral at Casterbridge. It fairly made my hair creep and fidget about like a vlock of sheep — ah, it did, souls! And when they had done, and the last trump had sounded, and the guns was fired over the dead hero's grave, a' icy-cold crop o' moist sweat hung upon my forehead, and another upon my jawbone. Ah, 'tis a very solemn thing!

'Well, as to father in the corner there,' the tranter said, pointing to old William, who was in the act of filling his mouth; 'he'd starve to death for music's sake now, as much as when he was a boy-chap of fifteen.'

'Truly, now,' said Michael Mail, clearing the corner of his throat in the manner of a man who meant to be convincing; 'there's a friendly tie of some sort between music and eating.' He lifted the

cup to his mouth, and drank himself gradually backwards from a perpendicular position to a slanting one, during which time his looks performed a circuit from the wall opposite him to the ceiling overhead. Then clearing the other corner of his throat: 'Once I was a-setting in the little kitchen of the Dree Mariners at Casterbridge, having a bit of dinner, and a brass band struck up in the street. Such a beautiful band as that were! I was setting eating fried liver and lights, I well can mind — ah, I was! and to save my life, I couldn't help chawing to the tune. Band played six-eight time; six-eight chaws I, willynilly. Band plays common; common time went my teeth among the liver and lights as true as a hair. Beautiful 'twere! Ah, I shall never forget that there band!'

'That's as tuneful a thing as ever I heard of,' said grandfather James, with the absent gaze which accompanies profound criticism.



'I don't like Michael's tuneful stories then,' said Mrs. Dewy. 'They are quite coarse to a person o' decent taste.'

Old Michael's mouth twitched here and there, as if he wanted to smile but didn't know where to begin, which gradually settled to an expression that it was not displeasing for a nice woman like the tranter's wife to correct him.

'Well, now,' said Reuben, with decisive earnestness, 'that sort o' coarse touch that's so upsetting to Ann's feelings is to my mind a recommendation; for it do always prove a story to be true. And for the same reason, I like a story with a bad moral. My sonnies, all true stories have a coarse touch or a bad moral, depend upon't. If the story-tellers could ha' got decency and good morals from true stories, who'd have troubled to invent parables?' Saying this the tranter arose to fetch a new stock of cider, ale, mead, and home-made wines.

Mrs. Dewy sighed and appended a remark (ostensibly behind her husband's back, though that the words should reach his ears distinctly was understood by both): 'Such a man as Dewy is! Nobody do know the trouble I have to keep that man barely respectable. And did you ever hear too — just now at suppertime — talking about "taties" with Michael in such a workfolk way. Well, 'tis what I was never brought up to! With our family 'twas never less than "taters", and very often "pertatoes" outright; mother was so particular and nice with us girls: there was no family in the parish that kept themselves up more than we.'

The hour of parting came. Fancy could not remain for the night because she had engaged a woman to wait up for her. She disappeared temporarily from the flagging party of dancers, and

then came downstairs wrapped up and looking altogether a different person from whom she had been hitherto, in fact (to Dick's sadness and disappointment), a woman somewhat reserved and of a phlegmatic temperament — nothing left in her of the romping girl that she had seemed but a short quarter-hour before, who had not minded the weight of Dick's hand upon her waist, nor shirked the purlieus of the mistletoe.

'What a difference!' thought the young man — hoary cynic *pro tem*. 'What a miserable deceiving difference between the manners of a maid's life at dancing times and at others! Look at this lovely Fancy! Through the whole past evening touchable, squeezable — even kissable! For whole half-hours I held her so close to me that not a sheet of paper could have been slipped between us; and I could feel her heart only just outside my own, her life beating on so close to mine, that I was aware of every breath in it. A flit is made upstairs — a hat and a cloak put on — and I no more dare to touch her than —' Thought failed him, and he returned to realities.

But this was an endurable misery in comparison with what followed. Mr. Shiner and his watch-chain, taking the intrusive advantage that ardent bachelors who are going homeward along the same road as a pretty young woman always do take of that circumstance, came forward to assure Fancy — with a total disregard of Dick's emotions, and in tones which were certainly not frigid — that he (Shiner) was not the man to go to bed before seeing his Lady Fair safe within her own door — not he, nobody should say he was that; — and that he would not leave her side an inch till the thing was done — drown him if he would. The proposal was assented to

by Miss Day, in Dick's foreboding judgment, with one degree — or at any rate, an appreciable fraction of a degree — of warmth beyond that required by a disinterested desire for protection from the dangers of the night.

All was over; and Dick surveyed the chair she had last occupied, looking now like a setting from which the gem has been torn. There stood her glass, and the romantic teaspoonful of elder wine at the bottom that she couldn't drink by trying ever so hard, in obedience to the mighty arguments of the tranter (his hand coming down upon her shoulder the while like a Nasmyth hammer^a); but the drinker was there no longer. There were the nine or ten pretty little crumbs she had left on her plate; but the eater was no more seen.

There seemed a disagreeable closeness of relationship between himself and the members of his family now that they were left alone again face to face. His father seemed quite offensive for appearing to be in just as high spirits as when the guests were there; and as for grandfather James (who had not yet left), he was quite fiendish in being rather glad they were gone.

'Really,' said the tranter, in a tone of placid satisfaction, 'I've had so little time to attend to myself all the evenen that I mean to enjoy a quiet meal now! A slice of this here ham — neither too fat nor too lean — so; and then a drop of this vinegar and pickles — there, that's it — and I shall be as fresh as a lark again! And to tell the truth, my sonny, my inside has been as dry as a lime-basket all night.'

'I like a party very well once in a

while,' said Mrs. Dewy, leaving off the adorned tones she had been bound to use throughout the evening and returning to the natural marriage voice; 'but, Lord, 'tis such a sight of heavy work next day! What with the dirty plates, and knives and forks, and dust and smother, and bits kicked off your furniture, and I don't know what all, why, a body could a'most wish there were no such things as Christmases. . . . Ah-h dear!' she yawned, till the clock in the corner had ticked several beats. She cast her eyes round upon the displaced, dust-laden furniture, and sat down overpowered at the sight.

'Well, I be getting all right by degrees, thank the Lord for't!' said the tranter cheerfully through a mangled mass of ham and bread, without lifting his eyes from his plate, and chopping away with his knife and fork as if he were felling trees. 'Ann, you may as well go on to bed at once, and not bide there making such sleepy faces; you look as long-favoured as a fiddle, upon my life, Ann. There, you must be wearied out, 'tis true. I'll do the doors and draw up the clock; and you go on, or you'll be as white as a sheet to-morrow.'

'Ay; I don't know whether I shan't or no.' The matron passed her hand across her eyes to brush away the film of sleep till she got upstairs.

Dick wondered how it was that when people were married they could be so blind to romance; and was quite certain that if he ever took to wife that dear impossible Fancy, he and she would never be so dreadfully practical and undemonstrative of the Passion as his father and mother were. The most extraordinary thing was that all the fathers and mothers he knew were just as undemonstrative as his own.

^a*Nasmyth hammer.* A steam-operated hammer invented by James Nasmyth in 1839.

DICK CALLS AT THE SCHOOL

CHAPTER IX

THE early days of the year drew on, and Fancy, having spent the holiday weeks at home, returned again to Mellstock.

Every spare minute of the week following her return was used by Dick in accidentally passing the schoolhouse in his journeys about the neighbourhood; but not once did she make herself visible. A handkerchief belonging to her had been providentially found by his mother in clearing the rooms the day after that of the dance; and by much contrivance Dick got it handed over to him, to leave with her at any time he should be near the school after her return. But he delayed taking the extreme measure of calling with it lest, had she really no sentiment of interest in him, it might be regarded as a slightly absurd errand, the reason guessed, and the sense of the ludicrous, which was rather keen in her, do his dignity considerable injury in her eyes; and what she thought of him, even apart from the question of her loving, was all the world to him now.

But the hour came when the patience of love at twenty-one could endure no longer. One Saturday he approached the school with a mild air of indifference, and had the satisfaction of seeing the object of his quest at the further end of her garden, trying, by the aid of a spade and gloves, to root a bramble that had intruded itself there.

He disguised his feelings from some suspicious-looking cottage-windows opposite by endeavouring to appear like a man in a great hurry of business, who



wished to leave the handkerchief and have done with such trifling errands.

This endeavour signally failed; for on approaching the gate he found it locked to keep the children, who were playing 'cross-dadder' in the front, from running into her private grounds.

She did not see him; and he could only think of one thing to be done, which was to shout her name.

'Miss Day!'

The words were uttered with a jerk and a look meant to imply to the cottages opposite that he was now simply one who liked shouting as a pleasant way of passing his time, without any reference to persons in gardens. The name died away, and the unconscious Miss Day continued digging and pulling as before.

He screwed himself up to enduring the cottage-windows yet more stoically, and shouted again. Fancy took no notice whatever.

He shouted the third time, with desperate vehemence, turning suddenly



about and retiring a little distance as if it were by no means for his own pleasure that he had come.

This time she heard him, came down the garden, and entered the school at the back. Footsteps echoed across the interior, the door opened, and three-quarters of the blooming young schoolmistress's face and figure stood revealed before him; a slice on her left-hand side being cut off by the edge of the door. Having surveyed and recognized him she came to the gate.

At sight of him had the pink of her cheeks increased, lessened, or did it continue to cover its normal area of ground? It was a question meditated several hundreds of times by her visitor in after-hours — the meditation, after wearying

involutions, always ending in one way, that it was impossible to say.

'Your handkerchief: Miss Day: I called with.' He held it out spasmodically and awkwardly. 'Mother found it: under a chair.'

'O, thank you very much for bringing it, Mr. Dewy. I couldn't think where I had dropped it.'

Now Dick, not being an experienced lover — indeed, never before having been engaged in the practice of love-making at all, except in a small school-boy way — could not take advantage of the situation; and out came the blunder which afterwards cost him so many bitter moments and a sleepless night: —

'Good-morning, Miss Day.'

'Good-morning, Mr. Dewy.'

The gate was closed; she was gone; and Dick was standing outside, unchanged in his condition from what he had been before he called. Of course the Angel was not to blame — a young woman living alone in a house could not ask him indoors unless she had known him better — he should have kept her outside before floundering into that fatal farewell. He wished that before he called he had realized more fully than he did the pleasure of being about to call; and turned away.

Discussion

1. Explain briefly the significance of the chapter titles.
2. As you probably know from your own experience, critical remarks usually need to be considered in context. If the conversation of Mr. and Mrs. Dewey were taken literally, what would you conclude about their married life? What indications are there that that conclusion would be incorrect?
3. Point out how Hardy relates Fancy's appearance to her character.
4. What is your opinion of the tranter's claim that "all true stories have a coarse touch or a bad moral"?



PART THE SECOND SPRING

PASSING BY THE SCHOOL

CHAPTER I

IT followed that as the spring advanced Dick walked abroad much more frequently than had hitherto been usual with him, and was continually finding that his nearest way to or from home lay by the road which skirted the garden of the school. The first-fruits of his perseverance were that, on turning the angle on the nineteenth journey by that track, he saw Miss Fancy's figure, clothed in a dark-grey dress, looking from a high open window upon the crown of his hat. The friendly greeting resulting from this rencounter was considered so valuable an elixir that Dick passed still oftener; and by the time he

had almost trodden a little path under the fence where never a path was before, he was rewarded with an actual meeting face to face on the open road before her gate. This brought another meeting, and another, Fancy faintly showing by her bearing that it was a pleasure to her of some kind to see him there; but the sort of pleasure she derived, whether exultation at the hope her exceeding fairness inspired, or the true feeling which was alone Dick's concern, he could not anyhow decide, although he meditated on her every little movement for hours after it was made.

A MEETING OF THE CHOIR

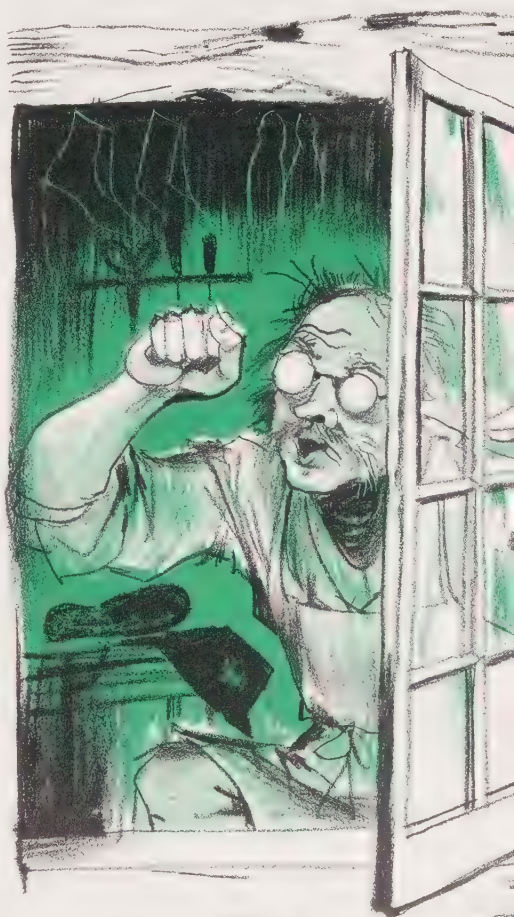
CHAPTER II

It was the evening of a fine spring day. The descending sun appeared as a nebulous blaze of amber light, its outline being lost in cloudy masses hanging round it like wild locks of hair.

The chief members of Mellstock parish choir were standing in a group in front of Mr. Penny's workshop in the lower village. They were all brightly illuminated, and each was backed up by a shadow as long as a steeple; the lowness of the source of light rendering the brims of their hats of no use at all as a protection to the eyes.

Mr. Penny's was the last house in that part of the parish, and stood in a hollow by the roadside; so that cart-wheels and horses' legs were about level with the sill of his shop-window. This was low and wide, and was open from morning till evening, Mr. Penny himself being invariably seen working inside like a framed portrait of a shoemaker by some modern Moroni¹⁰. He sat facing the road, with a boot on his knees and the awl in his hand, only looking up for a moment as he stretched out his arms and bent forward at the pull, when his spectacles flashed in the passer's face with a shine of flat whiteness, and then returned again to the boot as usual. Rows of lasts, small and large, stout and slender, covered the wall which formed the background, in

the extreme shadow of which a kind of dummy was seen sitting, in the shape of an apprentice with a string tied round his hair (probably to keep it out of his eyes). He smiled at remarks that floated in from without, but was never known to answer them in Mr. Penny's presence. Outside the window the upper-leather of a Wellington-boot was usually hung, pegged to a board as if to dry. No sign was over his door; in



¹⁰*Moroni*. Giambattista Moroni (c. 1510-1578), an Italian painter of life-like portraits.

fact — as with old banks and mercantile houses — advertising in any shape was scorned, and it would have been felt as beneath his dignity to paint up, for the benefit of strangers, the name of an establishment whose trade came solely by connection based on personal respect.

His visitors now came and stood on the outside of his window, sometimes leaning against the sill, sometimes moving a pace or two backwards and forwards in front of it. They talked with deliberate gesticulations to Mr. Penny, enthroned in the shadow of the interior.

'I do like a man to stick to men who be in the same line o' life — o' Sundays, anyway — that I do so.'

'Tis like all the doings of folk who don't know what a day's work is, that's what I say.'

'My belief is the man's not to blame; 'tis *she* — she's the bitter weed!'

'No, not altogether. He's a poor gawk-hammer. Look at his sermon yesterday.'

'His sermon was well enough, a very good guessable sermon, only he couldn't put it into words and speak it. That's all was the matter wi' the sermon. He hadn't been able to get it past his pen.'

'Well — ay, the sermon might have been good; for, 'tis true, the sermon of Old Eccl'ias-tes himself lay in Eccl'ias-tes's ink-bottle afore he got it out.'

Mr. Penny, being in the act of drawing the last stitch tight, could afford time to look up and throw in a word at this point.

'He's no spouter — that must be said, 'a b'lieve.'

'Tis a terrible muddle sometimes with the man, as far as spout do go,' said Spinks.

'Well, we'll say nothing about that,'

the tranter answered; 'for I don't believe 'twill make a penneth o' difference to we poor martels here or hereafter whether his sermons be good or bad, my sonnies.'

Mr. Penny made another hole with his awl, pushed in the thread, and looked up and spoke again at the extension of arms.

'Tis his goings-on, souls, that's what it is.' He clenched his features for an Herculean addition to the ordinary pull, and continued, 'The first thing he done when he came here was to be hot and strong about church business.'

'True,' said Spinks; 'that was the very first thing he done.'

Mr. Penny, having now been offered the ear of the assembly, accepted it, ceased stitching, swallowed an unimportant quantity of air as if it were a pill, and continued:

'The next thing he do do is to think about altering the church, until he found 'twould be a matter o' cost and what not, and then not to think no more about it.'



'True: that was the next thing he done.'

'And the next thing was to tell the young chaps that they were not on no account to put their hats in the christening font during service.'

'True.'

'And then 'twas this, and then 'twas that, and now 'tis —'

Words were not forcible enough to conclude the sentence, and Mr. Penny gave a huge pull to signify the concluding word.

'Now 'tis to turn us out of the quire neck and crop,' said the tranter after an interval of half a minute, not by way of explaining the pause and pull, which had been quite understood, but as a means of keeping the subject well before the meeting.

Mrs. Penny came to the door at this point in the discussion. Like all good wives, however much she was inclined to play the Tory to her husband's Whiggism, and *vice versa*, in times of peace,

she coalesced with him heartily enough in time of war.

'It must be owned he's not all there,' she replied in a general way to the fragments of talk she had heard from indoors. 'Far below poor Mr. Grinham' (the late vicar).

'Ay, there was this to be said for he, that you were quite sure he'd never come mumbudgeting to see ye, just as you were in the middle of your work, and put you out with his fuss and trouble about ye.'

'Never. But as for this new Mr. Maybold, though he mid be a very well-intending party in that respect, he's unbearable; for as to sifting your cinders, scrubbing your floors, or emptying your slops, why, you can't do it. I assure you I've not been able to empt them for several days, unless I throw 'em up the chimley or out of winder; for as sure as the sun you meet him at the door, coming to ask how you are, and 'tis such a confusing thing to meet a gentleman at the door when ye are in the mess o' washing.'

'Tis only for want of knowing better, poor gentleman,' said the tranter. 'His meaning's good enough. Ay, your pa'son comes by fate: 'tis heads or tails, like pitch-halfpenny, and no choosing; so we must take en as he is, my sonnies, and thank God he's no worse, I suppose.'

'I fancy I've seen him look across at Miss Day in a warmer way than Christianity asked for,' said Mrs. Penny musingly; 'but I don't quite like to say it.'

'O no; there's nothing in that,' said grandfather William.

'If there's nothing, we shall see nothing,' Mrs. Penny replied in the tone of a woman who might possibly have private opinions still.



'Ah, Mr. Grinham was the man!' said Bowman. 'Why, he never troubled us wi' a visit from year's end to year's end. You might go anywhere, do anything: you'd be sure never to see him.'

'Yes; he was a right sensible pa'son,' said Michael. 'He never entered our door but once in his life, and that was to tell my poor wife — ay, poor soul, dead and gone now, as we all shall! — that as she was such a' old aged person, and lived so far from the church, he didn't at all expect her to come any more to the service.'

'And 'a was a very jinerous gentleman about choosing the psalms and hymns o' Sundays. "Confound ye," says he, "blare and scrape what ye will, but don't bother me!"'

'And he was a very honourable man in not wanting any of us to come and hear him if we were all on-end for a jaunt or spree, or to bring the babies to be christened if they were inclined to squalling. There's good in a man's not putting a parish to unnecessary trouble.'

'And there's this here man never letting us have a bit o' peace; but keeping on about being good and upright till 'tis carried to such a pitch as I never see the like afore nor since!'

'No sooner had he got here than he found the font wouldn't hold water, as it hadn't for years off and on; and when I told him that Mr. Grinham never minded it, but used to spet upon his vinger and christen 'em just as well, 'a said, "Good Heavens! Send for a workman immediate. What place have I come to!" Which was no compliment to us, come to that.'

'Still, for my part,' said old William, 'though he's arrayed against us, I like the hearty borus-snorus ways of the new pa'son.'

'You, ready to die for the quire,' said Bowman reproachfully, 'to stick up for the quire's enemy, William!'

'Nobody will feel the loss of our church-work so much as I,' said the old man firmly: 'that you d'all know. I've a-been in the quire man and boy ever since I was a chiel of eleven. But for all that 'tisn't in me to call the man a bad man, because I truly and sincerely believe en to be a good young feller.'

Some of the youthful sparkle that used to reside there animated William's eye as he uttered the words, and a certain nobility of aspect was also imparted to him by the setting sun, which gave him a Titanic shadow at least thirty feet in length, stretching away to the east in outlines of imposing magnitude, his head finally terminating upon the trunk of a grand old oak-tree.

'Mayble's a hearty feller enough,' the tranter replied, 'and will spak to you be you dirty or be you clane. The first time I met en was in a drong, and though 'a didn't know me no more than the dead 'a passed the time of day. "D'ye do!" he said says he, nodding his head. "A fine day." Then the second time I met en was full-buff in town street, when my breeches were tore into a long strent by getting through a copse of thorns and brimbles for a short cut home-along; and not wanting to disgrace the man by spaking in that state, I fixed my eye on the weathercock to let en pass me as a stranger. But no: "How d'ye do, Reuben?" says he, right hearty, and shook my hand. If I'd been dressed in silver spangles from top to toe the man couldn't have been civiller.'

At this moment Dick was seen coming up the village street, and they turned and watched him.



A TURN IN THE DISCUSSION

CHAPTER III

'I'm afraid Dick's a lost man,' said the tranter.

'What? — no!' said Mail, implying by his manner that it was a far commoner thing for his ears to report what was not said than that his judgment should be at fault.

'Ay,' said the tranter, still gazing at Dick's unconscious advance. 'I don't at all like what I see! There's too many o' them looks out of the winder without noticing anything; too much shining of boots; too much peeping round corners; too much looking at the clock; telling about clever things *she* did till you be sick of it, and then upon a hint to that effect a horrible silence about her. I've walked the path once in my life and know the country, neighbours; and Dick's a lost man!' The tranter turned a quarter round and smiled a smile of miserable satire at the setting new moon, which happened to catch his eye.

The others became far too serious at

this announcement to allow them to speak; and they still regarded Dick in the distance.

''Twas his mother's fault,' the tranter continued, 'in asking the young woman to our party last Christmas. When I eyed the blue frock and light heels o' the maid, I had my thoughts directly. "God bless thee, Dicky my sonny," I said to myself, "there's a delusion for thee!"'

'They seemed to be rather distant in manner last Sunday, I thought?' Mail tentatively observed, as became one who was not a member of the family.

'Ay, that's a part of the zickness. Distance belongs to it, slyness belongs to it, queerest things on earth belongs to it! There, 'tmay as well come early as late s'far as I know. The sooner begun, the sooner over; for come it will.'

'The question I ask is,' said Mr. Spinks, connecting into one thread the two subjects of discourse, as became a



man learned in rhetoric, and beating with his hand in a way which signified that the manner rather than the matter of his speech was to be observed, 'how did Mr. Maybold know she could play the organ? You know we had it from her own lips, as far as lips go, that she has never, first or last, breathed such a thing to him; much less that she ever would play.'

In the midst of this puzzle Dick joined the party, and the news which had caused such a convulsion among the ancient musicians was unfolded to him. 'Well,' he said, blushing at the allusion to Miss Day, 'I know by some words of hers that she has a particular wish not to play, because she is a friend of ours; and how the alteration comes I don't know.'

'Now, this is my plan,' said the tranter, reviving the spirit of the discussion by the infusion of new ideas, as was his custom — 'this is my plan; if you don't like it, no harm's done. We all know one another very well, don't we, neighbours?'

That they knew one another very well was received as a statement which, though familiar, should not be omitted in introductory speeches.

'Then I say this' — and the tranter in his emphasis slapped down his hand on Mr. Spinks's shoulder with a momentum of several pounds, upon which Mr. Spinks tried to look not in the least

startled — 'I say that we all move down-along straight as a line to Pa'son Mayble's when the clock has gone six to-morrow night. There we one and all stand in the passage; then one or two of us go in and spak to en, man and man, and say, "Pa'son Mayble, every tradesman d'like to have his own way in his workshop, and Mellstock Church is yours. Instead of turning us out neck and crop, let us stay on till Christmas, and we'll gie way to the young woman, Mr. Mayble, and make no more ado about it. And we shall always be quite willing to touch our hats when we meet ye, Mr. Mayble, just as before." That sounds very well? Hey?'

'Proper well, in faith, Reuben Dewy.'

'And we won't sit down in his house; 'twould be looking too familiar when only just reconciled?'

'No need at all to sit down. Just do our duty man and man, turn round, and march out — he'll think all the more of us for it.'

'I hardly think Leaf had better go wi' us?' said Michael, turning to Leaf and taking his measure from top to bottom by the eye. 'He's so terrible silly that he might ruin the concern.'

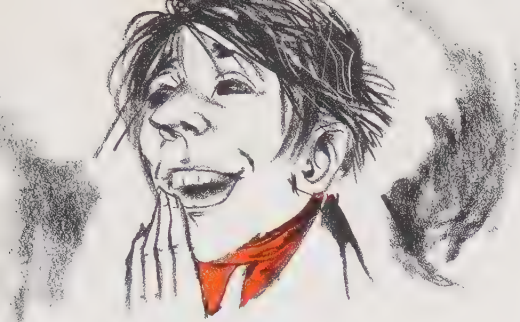
'He don't want to go much; do ye, Thomas Leaf?' said William.

'Hee-hee! no; I don't want to. Only a teeny bit!'

'I be mortal afeard, Leaf, that you'll never be able to tell how many cuts d'take to sharpen a spar,' said Mail.

'I never had no head, never! that's how it happened to happen, hee-hee!'

They all assented to this, not with any sense of humiliating Leaf by disparaging him after an open confession, but because it was an accepted thing that Leaf didn't in the least mind having no head, that deficiency of his be-



ing an unimpassioned matter of parish history.

'But I can sing my treble!' continued Thomas Leaf, quite delighted at being called a fool in such a friendly way; 'I can sing my treble as well as any maid, or married woman either, and better! And if Jim had lived, I should have had a clever brother! To-morrow is poor Jim's birthday. He'd ha' been twenty-six if he'd lived till to-morrow.'

'You always seem very sorry for Jim,' said old William musingly.

'Ah! I do. Such a stay to mother as he'd always have been! She'd never have had to work in her old age if he had continued strong, poor Jim!'

'What was his age when 'a died?'

'Four hours and twenty minutes, poor Jim. 'A was born as might be at night; and 'a didn't last as might be till the morning. No, 'a didn't last. Mother called en Jim on the day that would ha' been his christening-day if he had lived; and she's always thinking about en. You see, he died so very young.'

'Well, 'twas rather youthful,' said Michael.

'Now to my mind that woman is very romantical on the matter o' children?' said the tranter, his eye sweeping his audience.

'Ah, well she mid be,' said Leaf. 'She had twelve regular one after another, and they all, except myself, died very young; either before they was born or just afterwards.'

'Pore feller, too. I suppose th't want

to come wi' us?' the tranter murmured.

'Well, Leaf, you shall come wi' us as yours is such a melancholy family,' said old William rather sadly.

'I never see such a melancholy family as that afore in my life,' said Reuben. 'There's Leaf's mother, poor woman! Every morning I see her eyes mooning out through the panes of glass like a pot-sick winder-flower; and as Leaf sings a very high treble, and we don't know what we should do without en for upper G, we'll let en come as a trate, poor feller.'

'Ay, we'll let en come, 'a b'lieve,' said Mr. Penny, looking up, as the pull happened to be at that moment.

'Now,' continued the tranter, dispersing by a new tone of voice these digressions about Leaf; 'as to going to see the pa'son, one of us might call and ask en his meaning, and 'twould be just as well done; but it will add a bit of a flourish to the cause if the quire waits on him as a body. Then the great thing to mind is, not for any of our fellers to be nervous; so before starting we'll one and all come to my house and have a rasher of bacon; then every man-jack het a pint of cider into his inside; then we'll warm up an extra drop wi' some mead and a bit of ginger; every one take a thimbleful — just a glimmer of a drop, mind ye, no more, to finish off his inner man — and march off to Pa'son Mayble. Why, sonnies, a man's not himself till he is fortified wi' a bit and a drop! We shall be able to look any gentleman in the face then without shrink or shame.'

Mail recovered from a deep meditation and downward glance into the earth in time to give a cordial approval to this line of action, and the meeting adjourned.



THE INTERVIEW WITH THE VICAR

CHAPTER IV

AT six o'clock next day the whole body of men in the choir emerged from the tranter's door, and advanced with a firm step down the lane. This dignity of march gradually became obliterated as they went on, and by the time they reached the hill behind the vicarage a faint resemblance to a flock of sheep might have been discerned in the venerable party. A word from the tranter, however, set them right again; and as they descended the hill, the regular tramp, tramp, tramp of the united feet was clearly audible from the vicarage garden. At the opening of the gate there was another short interval of irregular shuffling, caused by a rather peculiar habit the gate had, when swung open quickly, of striking against the bank and slamming back into the opener's face.

'Now keep step again, will ye?' said the tranter. 'It looks better, and more

becomes the high class of arrant which has brought us here.' Thus they advanced to the door.

At Reuben's ring the more modest of the group turned aside, adjusted their hats, and looked critically at any shrub that happened to lie in the line of vision; endeavouring thus to give a person who chanced to look out of the windows the impression that their request, whatever it was going to be, was rather a casual thought occurring whilst they were inspecting the vicar's shrubbery and grass-plot than a predetermined thing. The tranter who, coming frequently to the vicarage with luggage, coals, firewood, etc., had none of the awe for its precincts that filled the breasts of most of the others, fixed his eyes firmly on the knocker during this interval of waiting. The knocker having no characteristic worthy of notice he relinquished it for a knot in one

of the door-panels, and studied the winding lines of the grain.

'O, sir, please, here's Tranter Dewy, and old William Dewy, and young Richard Dewy, O, and all the quire too, sir, except the boys, a-come to see you!' said Mr. Maybold's maid-servant to Mr. Maybold, the pupils of her eyes dilating like circles in a pond.

'All the choir?' said the astonished vicar (who may be shortly described as a good-looking young man with courageous eyes, timid mouth, and neutral nose), abandoning his writing and looking at his parlour-maid after speaking, like a man who fancied he had seen her face before but couldn't recollect where.

'And they looks very firm, and Tranter Dewy do turn neither to the right hand nor to the left, but stares quite straight and solemn with his mind made up!'

'O, all the choir,' repeated the vicar to himself, trying by that simple device to trot out his thoughts on what the choir could come for.

'Yes; every man-jack of 'em, as I be alive!' (The parlour-maid was rather local in manner, having in fact been raised in the same village.) 'Really, sir, 'tis thought by many in town and country that —'

'Town and country! — Heavens, I had no idea that I was public property in this way!' said the vicar, his face acquiring a hue somewhere between that of the rose and the peony. 'Well, "It is thought in town and country that —"'

'It is thought that you be going to get it hot and strong! — excusen my incivility, sir.'

The vicar suddenly recalled to his recollection that he had long ago settled it to be decidedly a mistake to encourage his servant Jane in giving personal opinions. The servant Jane saw by the vicar's face that he recalled this fact to his mind; and removing her forehead from the edge of the door, and rubbing away the indent that edge had



made, vanished into the passage as Mr. Maybold remarked, 'Show them in, Jane.'

A few minutes later a shuffling and jostling (reduced to as refined a form as was compatible with the nature of shuffles and jostles) was heard in the passage; then an earnest and prolonged wiping of shoes, conveying the notion that volumes of mud had to be removed; but the roads being so clean that not a particle of dirt appeared on the choir's boots (those of all the elder members being newly oiled, and Dick's brightly polished), this wiping might have been set down simply as a desire to show that respectable men had no wish to take a mean advantage of clean roads for curtailing proper ceremonies. Next there came a powerful whisper from the same quarter: —

'Now stand stock-still there, my sonnies, one and all! And don't make no noise; and keep your backs close to the wall, that company may pass in and out easy if they want to without squeezing through ye: and we two are enough to go in.' . . . The voice was the tranter's.

"I wish I could go in too and see the sight!" said a reedy voice — that of Leaf.

"'Tis a pity Leaf is so terrible silly, or else he might," another said.

"I never in my life seed a quire go into a study to have it out about the playing and singing," pleaded Leaf; "and I should like to see it just once!"

"Very well; we'll let en come in," said the tranter. "You'll be like chips in porridge,"¹¹ Leaf — neither good nor hurt. All right, my sonny, come along; and immediately himself, old William, and Leaf appeared in the room.

"We took the liberty to come and see 'ee, sir," said Reuben, letting his hat



hang in his left hand, and touching with his right the brim of an imaginary one on his head. 'We've come to see 'ee, sir, man and man, and no offence, I hope?'

'None at all,' said Mr. Maybold.

'This old aged man standing by my side is father; William Dewy by name, sir.'

'Yes; I see it is,' said the vicar, nodding aside to old William, who smiled.

'I thought ye mightn't know en without his bass-viol,' the tranter apologized. 'You see, he always wears his best clothes and his bass-viol a-Sundays, and it do make such a difference in a' old man's look.'

'And who's that young man?' the vicar said.

'Tell the pa'son yer name,' said the tranter, turning to Leaf, who stood with his elbows nailed back to a bookcase.

¹¹*chips in porridge.* "This, a local expression, must be a corruption of something less questionable." (Hardy's footnote)



'Not I — not a morsel — hee, hee! I was afraid it mightn't please your holiness, sir, that's all.'

The tranter, finding Leaf get on so very well through his negative qualities, was tempted in a fit of generosity to advance him still higher, by giving him credit for positive ones. 'He's very clever for a silly chap, good-now, sir. You never knewed a young feller keep his smock-frocks so ciane; very honest too. His ghastly looks is all there is against en, poor feller; but we can't help our looks, you know, sir.'

'True: we cannot. You live with your mother, I think, Leaf?'

The tranter looked at Leaf to express that the most friendly assistant to his tongue could do no more for him now, and that he must be left to his own resources.

'Yes, sir: a widder, sir. Ah, if brother Jim had lived she'd have had a clever son to keep her without work!'

'Please, Thomas Leaf, your holiness!' said Leaf, trembling.

'I hope you'll excuse his looks being so very thin,' continued the tranter deprecatingly, turning to the vicar again. 'But 't isn't his fault, poor feller. He's rather silly by nature, and could never get fat; though he's a' excellent treble, and so we keep him on.'

'I never had no head, sir,' said Leaf, eagerly grasping at this opportunity for being forgiven his existence.

'Ah, poor young man!' said Mr. Maybold.

'Bless you, he don't mind it a bit, if you don't, sir,' said the tranter assuringly. 'Do ye, Leaf?'



'Indeed! poor woman. Give her this half-crown. I'll call and see your mother.'

'Say, "Thank you, sir,"' the tranter whispered imperatively towards Leaf.

'Thank you, sir!' said Leaf.

'That's it, then; sit down, Leaf,' said Mr. Maybold.

'Y-yes, sir!'

The tranter cleared his throat after this accidental parenthesis about Leaf, rectified his bodily position, and began his speech.

'Mr. Mayble,' he said, 'I hope you'll excuse my common way, but I always like to look things in the face.'

Reuben made a point of fixing this sentence in the vicar's mind by gazing hard at him at the conclusion of it, and then out of the window.

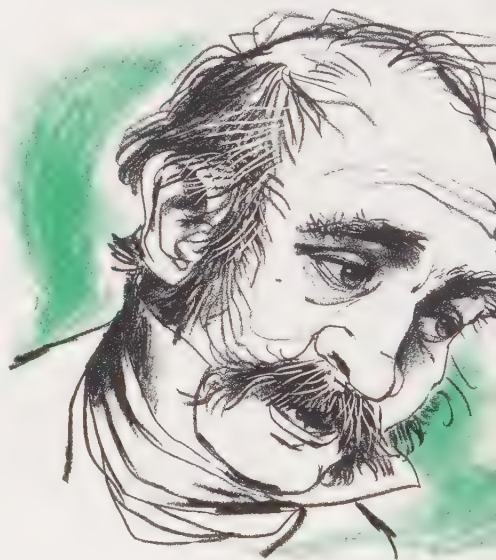
Mr. Maybold and old William looked in the same direction, apparently under the impression that the things' faces aluded to were there visible.

'What I have been thinking' — the tranter implied by this use of the past tense that he was hardly so discourteous as to be positively thinking it then — 'is that the quire ought to be gie'd a little time, and not done away wi' till Christmas, as a fair thing between man and man. And, Mr. Mayble, I hope you'll excuse my common way?'

'I will, I will. Till Christmas,' the vicar murmured, stretching the two words to a great length, as if the distance to Christmas might be measured in that way. 'Well, I want you all to understand that I have no personal fault to find, and that I don't wish to change the church music by forcible means, or in a way which should hurt the feelings of any parishioners. Why I have at last spoken definitely on the subject is that a player has been brought under — I

may say pressed upon — my notice several times by one of the churchwardens. And as the organ I brought with me is here waiting' (pointing to a cabinet-organ standing in the study), 'there is no reason for longer delay.'

'We made a mistake I suppose then, sir? But we understood the young woman didn't want to play particularly?' The tranter arranged his counte-



nance to signify that he did not want to be inquisitive in the least.

'No, nor did she. Nor did I definitely wish her to just yet; for your playing is very good. But, as I said, one of the churchwardens has been so anxious for a change that, as matters stand, I couldn't consistently refuse my consent.'

Now for some reason or other the vicar at this point seemed to have an idea that he had prevaricated; and as an honest vicar it was a thing he determined not to do. He corrected himself, blushing as he did so, though why he should blush was not known to Reuben.

'Understand me rightly,' he said: 'the churchwarden proposed it to me, but I had thought myself of getting — Miss Day to play.'

'Which churchwarden might that be who proposed her, sir? — excusing my common way.' The tranter intimated by his tone that so far from being inquisitive he did not even wish to ask a single question.

'Mr. Shiner, I believe.'

'Clk, my sonny! — beg your pardon, sir, that's only a form of words of mine, and slipped out accidental — he nourishes enmity against us for some reason



or another; perhaps because we played rather hard upon en Christmas night. Anyhow 'tis certain sure that Mr. Shiner's real love for music of a particular kind isn't his reason. He've no more ear than that chair. But let that be.'

'I don't think you should conclude that, because Mr. Shiner wants a different music, he has any ill-feeling for you. I myself, I must own, prefer organ-music to any other. I consider it most

proper, and feel justified in endeavouring to introduce it; but then, although other music is better, I don't say yours is not good.'

'Well then, Mr. Mayble, since death's to be, we'll die like men any day you name (excusing my common way).'

Mr. Maybold bowed his head.

'All we thought was, that for us old ancient singers to be choked off quiet at no time in particular, as now, in the Sundays after Easter, would seem rather mean in the eyes of other parishes, sir. But if we fell glorious with a bit of a flourish at Christmas, we should have a respectable end, and not dwindle away at some nameless paltry second-Sunday-after or Sunday-next-before something, that's got no name of his own.'

'Yes, yes, that's reasonable; I own it's reasonable.'

'You see, Mr. Mayble, we've got — do I keep you inconvenient long, sir?'

'No, no.'

'We've got our feelings — father there especially.'

The tranter, in his earnestness, had advanced his person to within six inches of the vicar's.

'Certainly, certainly!' said Mr. Maybold, retreating a little for convenience of seeing. 'You are all enthusiastic on the subject, and I am all the more gratified to find you so. A Laodicean¹² lukewarmness is worse than wrongheadedness itself.'

'Exactly, sir. In fact now, Mr. Mayble,' Reuben continued more impressively, and advancing a little closer still to the vicar, 'father there is a perfect figure o' wonder, in the way of being fond of music!'

The vicar drew back a little further, the tranter suddenly also standing back a foot or two to throw open the view of

¹²*Laodicean.* The early Christians of Laodicea, a city in Asia Minor, were noted for their indifference to religious matters.

his father, and pointing to him at the same time.

Old William moved uneasily in the large chair, and with a minute smile on the mere edge of his lips for good-manners, said he was indeed very fond of tunes.

'Now, you see exactly how it is,' Reuben continued, appealing to Mr. Maybold's sense of justice by looking sideways into his eyes. The vicar seemed to see how it was so well that the gratified tranter walked up to him again with even vehement eagerness, so that his waistcoat-buttons almost rubbed against the vicar's as he continued: 'As to father, if you or I, or any man or woman of the present generation, at the time music is a-playing, was to shake your fist in father's face, as may be this way, and say, "Don't you be delighted with that music!"' — the tranter went back to where Leaf was sitting, and held his fist so close to Leaf's face that the latter pressed his head back against the wall: 'All right, Leaf, my sonny, I won't hurt you; 'tis just to show my meaning to Mr. Mayble. — As I was saying, if you or I, or any man, was to shake your fist in father's face this way, and say, "William, your life or your music!" he'd say, "My life!" Now that's father's nature all over; and you see, sir, it must hurt the feelings of a man of that kind for him and his bass-viol to be done away wi' neck and crop.'

The tranter went back to the vicar's front and again looked earnestly at his face.

'True, true, Dewy,' Mr. Maybold answered, trying to withdraw his head and shoulders without moving his feet; but finding this impracticable, edging back another inch. These frequent retreats had at last jammed Mr. Maybold

between his easy-chair and the edge of the table.

And at the moment of the announcement of the choir Mr. Maybold had just re-dipped the pen he was using; at their entry, instead of wiping it, he had laid it on the table with the nib overhanging. At the last retreat his coat-tails came in contact with the pen, and down it rolled, first against the back of the chair, thence turning a summersault into the seat, thence falling to the floor with a rattle.

The vicar stooped for his pen, and the tranter, wishing to show that, however great their ecclesiastical differences, his mind was not so small as to let this affect his social feelings, stooped also.

'And have you anything else you want to explain to me, Dewy?' said Mr. Maybold from under the table.

'Nothing, sir. And, Mr. Mayble, you be not offended? I hope you see our desire is reason?' said the tranter from under the chair.

'Quite, quite; and I shouldn't think of refusing to listen to such a reasonable request,' the vicar replied. Seeing that Reuben had secured the pen he resumed his vertical position, and added, 'You know, Dewy, it is often said how difficult a matter it is to act up to our convictions and please all parties. It may be said with equal truth, that it is difficult for a man of any appreciativeness to have convictions at all. Now in my case, I see right in you, and right in Shiner. I see that violins are good, and that an organ is good; and when we introduce the organ it will not be that fiddles were bad, but that an organ was better. That you'll clearly understand, Dewy?'

'I will; and thank you very much for such feelings, sir. Piph-h-h-h! How the

blood do get into my head, to be sure, whenever I quat down like that!’ said Reuben, who having also risen to his feet stuck the pen vertically in the ink-stand and almost through the bottom, that it might not roll down again under any circumstances whatever.

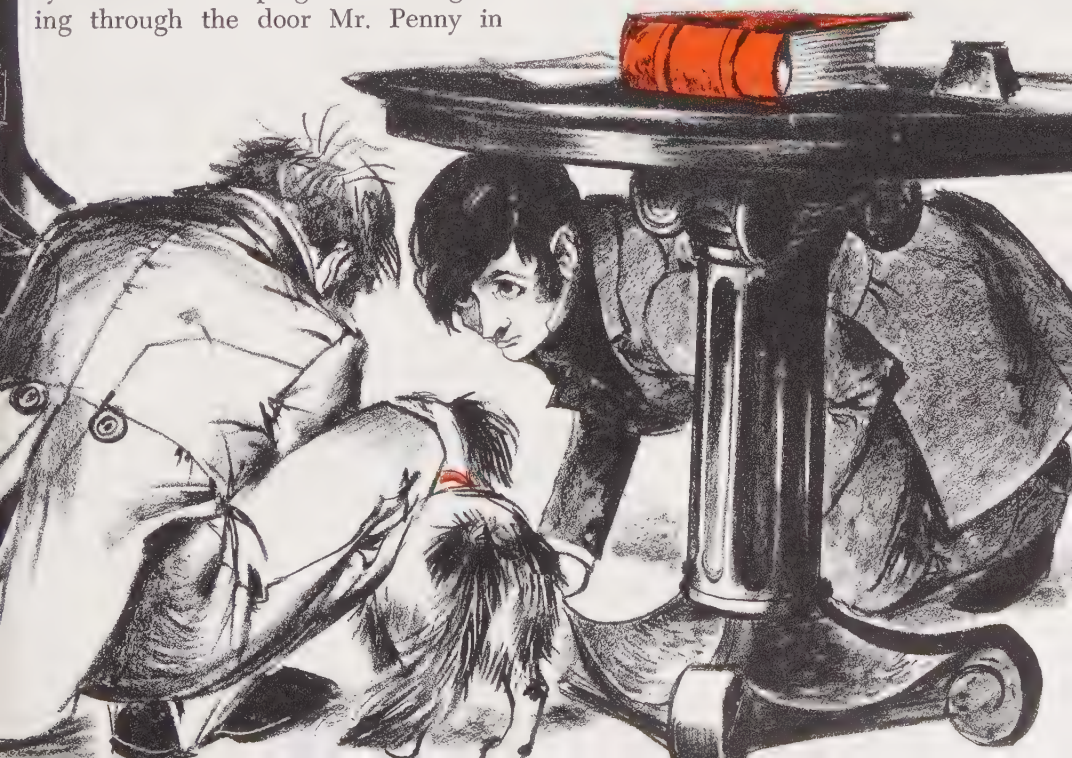
Now the ancient body of minstrels in the passage felt their curiosity surging higher and higher as the minutes passed. Dick, not having much affection for this errand, soon grew tired, and went away in the direction of the school. Yet their sense of propriety would probably have restrained them from any attempt to discover what was going on in the study had not the vicar’s pen fallen to the floor. The conviction that the movement of chairs, &c., necessitated by the search, could only have been caused by the catastrophe of a bloody fight beginning, overpowered all other considerations; and they advanced to the door, which had only just fallen to. Thus, when Mr. Maybold raised his eyes after the stooping he beheld glaring through the door Mr. Penny in

full-length portraiture, Mail’s face and shoulders above Mr. Penny’s head, Spinks’s forehead and eyes over Mail’s crown, and a fractional part of Bowman’s countenance under Spinks’s arm — crescent-shaped portions of other heads and faces being visible behind these — the whole dozen and odd eyes bristling with eager inquiry.

Mr. Penny, as is the case with excitable bootmakers and men, seeing the vicar look at him and hearing no word spoken, thought it incumbent upon himself to say something of any kind. Nothing suggested itself till he had looked for about half a minute at the vicar.

‘You’ll excuse my naming of it, sir,’ he said, regarding with much commiseration the mere surface of the vicar’s face; ‘but perhaps you don’t know that your chin have bust out a-bleeding where you cut yourself a-shaving this morning, sir.’

‘Now, that was the stooping, depend



upon't,' the tranter suggested, also looking with much interest at the vicar's chin. 'Blood always will bust out again if you hang down the member that's been bleeding.'

Old William raised his eyes and watched the vicar's bleeding chin likewise; and Leaf advanced two or three paces from the bookcase, absorbed in the contemplation of the same phenomenon with parted lips and delighted eyes.

'Dear me, dear me!' said Mr. Maybold hastily, looking very red and brushing his chin with his hand, then taking out his handkerchief and wiping the place.

'That's it, sir; all right again now, 'a b'lieve — a mere nothing,' said Mr. Penny. 'A little bit of fur off your hat will stop it in a minute if it should bust out again.'

'I'll let 'ee have a bit off mine,' said Reuben, to show his good feeling; 'my hat isn't so new as yours, sir, and 'twon't hurt mine a bit.'

'No, no; thank you, thank you,' Mr. Maybold again nervously replied.

''Twas rather a deep cut seemingly?' said Reuben, feeling these to be the kindest and best remarks he could make.

'O, no; not particularly.'

'Well, sir, your hand will shake sometimes a-shaving, and just when it comes into your head that you may cut yourself, there's the blood.'

'I have been revolving in my mind that question of the time at which we make the change,' said Mr. Maybold, 'and I know you'll meet me half-way. I think Christmas-day as much too late for me as the present time is too early for you. I suggest Michaelmas¹³ or thereabout as a convenient time for both parties; for I think your objection to a Sunday which has no name is not one of any real weight.'

'Very good, sir. I suppose mortal men mustn't expect their own way entirely; and I express in all our names that we'll make shift and be satisfied with what you say.' The tranter touched the brim of his imaginary hat again, and all the choir did the same. 'About Michaelmas, then, as far as you are concerned, sir, and then we make room for the next generation.'

'About Michaelmas,' said the vicar.

¹³*Michaelmas*. The feast of St. Michael, September 29.

Discussion

1. Explain briefly the chapter titles.
2. Recall some of the opinions expressed of Mr. Maybold. What does Mrs. Penny have against him?
3. On what score does the tranter defend the new vicar?
4. What prompts the tranter to remark that his son is "a lost man"?
5. What is the proposal of Mr. Maybold's that is disturbing the choir?
6. Provide evidence that the tranter was a fairly good psychologist.
7. What purpose is served by the brief scene between the vicar and his maid?
8. What keeps the tranter's comments on Leaf from seeming cruel?



RETURNING HOMEWARD

CHAPTER V

"A rook it very well, then?" said Mail, as they all walked up the hill.

'He behaved like a man; 'a did so,' said the tranter. 'And I'm glad we've let en know our minds. And though, beyond that, we ha'n't got much by going, 'twas worth while. He won't forget it. Yes, he took it very well. Supposing this tree here was Pa'son Mayble, and I standing here, and thik gr't stone is father sitting in the easy-chair. "Dewy," says he, "I don't wish to change the church music in a forcible way."' "

'That was very nice o' the man, even though words be wind.'

'Proper nice — out and out nice. The fact is,' said Reuben confidentially, 'tis how you take a man. Everybody must be managed. Queens must be managed: kings must be managed; for men want managing almost as much as women, and that's saying a good deal.'

'Tis truly!' murmured the husbands.

'Pa'son Mayble and I were as good friends all through it as if we'd been sworn brothers. Ay, the man's well

enough; 'tis what's put in his head that spoils him, and that's why we've got to go.'

'There's really no believing half you hear about people nowadays.'

'Bless ye, my sonnies, 'tisn't the pa'son's move at all. That gentleman over there' (the tranter nodded in the direction of Shiner's farm) 'is at the root of the mischty.'

'What! Shiner?'

'Ah; and I see what the pa'son don't see. Why, Shiner is for putting forward that young woman that only last night I was saying was our Dick's sweetheart, but I suppose can't be, and making much of her in the sight of the congregation, and thinking he'll win her by showing her off. Well, perhaps 'a woll.'

'Then the music is second to the woman, the other churchwarden is second to Shiner, the pa'son is second to the churchwardens, and God A'mighty is nowhere at all.'

'That's true; and you see,' continued Reuben, 'at the very beginning it put

me in a stud as to how to quarrel wi' en. In short, to save my soul, I couldn't quarrel wi' such a civil man without be-lying my conscience. Says he to father there, in a voice as quiet as a lamb's, "William, you are a' old aged man, as all shall be, so sit down in my easy-chair, and rest yourself." And down father zot. I could fain ha' laughed at thee, father; for thou'st take it so unconcerned at first, and then looked so frightened when the chair-bottom sunk in.'

'You see,' said old William, hastening to explain, 'I was scared to find the bot-tom gie way — what should I know o' spring bottoms? — and thought I had broke it down: and of course as to breaking down a man's chair, I didn't wish any such thing.'

'And, neighbours, when a feller, ever so much up for a miff, d'see his own father sitting in his enemy's easy-chair, and a poor chap like Leaf made the best of, as if he almost had brains — why, it knocks all the wind out of his sail at once: it did out of mine.'

'If that young figure of fun — Fance Day, I mean,' said Bowman, 'hadn't been so mighty forward wi' showing herself off to Shiner and Dick and the rest, 'tis my belief we should never ha' left the gallery.'

'Tis my belief that though Shiner fired the bullets, the parson made 'em,' said Mr. Penny. 'My wife sticks to it that he's in love wi' her.'

'That's a thing we shall never know. I can't onriddle her, nohow.'

'Thou'st ought to be able to onriddle such a little chiel as she,' the tranter observed.

'The littler the maid, the bigger the riddle, to my mind. And coming of such a stock, too, she may well be a twister.'

'Yes; Geoffrey Day is a clever man if

ever there was one. Never says any-thing: not he.'

'Never.'

'You might live wi' that man, my son-nies, a hundred years, and never know there was anything in him.'

'Ay; one o' these up-country London ink-bottle chaps would call Geoffrey a fool.'

'Ye never find out what's in that man: never,' said Spinks. 'Close? ah, he is close! He can hold his tongue well. That man's dumbness is wonderful to listen to.'

'There's so much sense in it. Every moment of it is brimmed over wi' sound understanding.'

'A can hold his tongue very clever — very clever truly,' echoed Leaf. 'A do look at me as if 'a could see my thoughts running round like the works of a clock.'

'Well, all will agree that the man can halt well in his talk, be it a long time or be it a short time. And though we can't expect his daughter to inherit his close-ness, she may have a few dribblets from his sense.'

'And his pocket, perhaps.'

'Yes; the nine hundred pound that everybody says he's worth; but I call it four hundred and fifty; for I never be-lieve more than half I hear.'

'Well, he've made a pound or two, and I suppose the maid will have it, since there's nobody else. But 'tis rather sharp upon her, if she's born to fortune, to bring her up as if not born for it, and letting her work so hard.'

'Tis all upon his principle. A long-headed feller!

'Ah,' murmured Spinks, 'twould be sharper upon her if she were born for fortune, and not to it! I suffer from that affliction.'



YALBURY WOOD AND THE KEEPER'S HOUSE

CHAPTER VI

A MOOD of blitheness rarely experienced even by young men was Dick's on the following Monday morning. It was the week after the Easter holidays, and he was journeying along with Smart the mare and the light spring-cart, watching the damp slopes of the hill-sides as they streamed in the warmth of the sun, which at this unsettled season shone on the grass with the freshness of an occasional inspector rather than as an accustomed proprietor. His errand was to fetch Fancy, and some additional household goods, from her father's house in the neighbouring parish to her dwelling at Mellstock. The distant view was darkly shaded with clouds; but the nearer parts of the landscape were whitely illumined by the visible rays of the sun streaming down across the heavy grey shade behind.

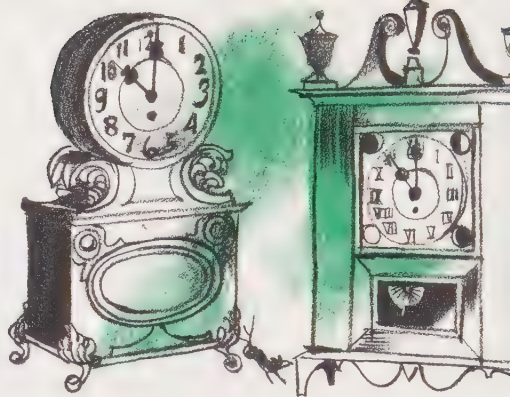
The tranter had not yet told his son

of the state of Shiner's heart that had been suggested to him by Shiner's movements. He preferred to let such delicate affairs right themselves; experience having taught him* that the uncertain phenomenon of love, as it existed in other people, was not a groundwork upon which a single action of his own life could be founded.

Geoffrey Day lived in the depths of Yalbury Wood, which formed portion of one of the outlying estates of the Earl of Wessex, to whom Day was head gamekeeper, timber-steward, and general overlooker for this district. The wood was intersected by the highway from Casterbridge to London at a place not far from the house, and some trees had of late years been felled between its windows and the ascent of Yalbury Hill, to give the solitary cottager a glimpse of the passers-by.

It was a satisfaction to walk into the keeper's house, even as a stranger, on a fine spring morning like the present. A curl of wood-smoke came from the chimney and drooped over the roof like a blue feather in a lady's hat; and the sun shone obliquely upon the patch of grass in front, which reflected its brightness through the open doorway and up the staircase opposite, lighting up each riser with a shiny green radiance and leaving the top of each step in shade.

The window-sill of the front room was between four and five feet from the floor, dropping inwardly to a broad low bench, over which, as well as over the whole surface of the wall beneath, there always hung a deep shade, which was considered objectionable on every ground save one, namely, that the perpetual sprinkling of seeds and water by the caged canary above was not noticed



as an eyesore by visitors. The window was set with thickly-leaded diamond glazing, formed, especially in the lower panes, of knotty glass of various shades of green. Nothing was better known to Fancy than the extravagant manner in which these circular knots or eyes distorted everything seen through them from the outside—lifting hats from heads, shoulders from bodies; scattering the spokes of cartwheels, and bending the straight fir-trunks into semicircles. The ceiling was carried by a beam traversing its midst, from the side of which projected a large nail, used solely and constantly as a peg for Geoffrey's hat; the nail was arched by a rainbow-shaped stain, imprinted by the brim of the said hat when it was hung there dripping wet.

The most striking point about the room was the furniture. This was a repetition upon inanimate objects of the old principle introduced by Noah, consisting for the most part of two articles of every sort. The duplicate system of furnishing owed its existence to the forethought of Fancy's mother, exercised from the date of Fancy's birthday onwards. The arrangement spoke for itself: nobody who knew the tone of the household could look at the goods without being aware that the second set was a provision for Fancy when she should marry and have a house of her own. The



most noticeable instance was a pair of green-faced eight-day clocks ticking alternately, which were severally two-and-a-half minutes and three minutes striking the hour of twelve, one proclaiming, in Italian flourishes, Thomas Wood as the name of its maker, and the other — arched at the top, and altogether of more cynical appearance — that of Ezekiel Saunders. They were two departed clockmakers of Casterbridge,



whose desperate rivalry throughout their lives was nowhere more emphatically perpetuated than here at Geoffrey's. These chief specimens of the marriage provision were supported on the right by a couple of kitchen dressers, each fitted complete with their cups, dishes, and plates, in their turn followed by two dumb-waiters, two family Bibles,



two warming-pans, and two intermixed sets of chairs.

But the position last reached — the chimney-corner — was, after all, the most attractive side of the parallelogram. It was large enough to admit, in addition to Geoffrey himself, Geoffrey's wife, her chair, and her work-table, entirely within the line of the mantel, without danger or even inconvenience from the heat of the fire; and was spacious enough overhead to allow of the insertion of wood poles for the hanging of bacon, which were cloaked with long shreds of soot floating on the draught like the tattered banners on the walls of ancient aisles.

These points were common to most chimney-corners of the neighbourhood; but one feature there was which made Geoffrey's fireside not only an object of interest to casual aristocratic visitors — to whom every cottage fireside was more or less a curiosity — but the admiration of friends who were accustomed to fireplaces of the ordinary hamlet model. This peculiarity was a little window in the chimney-back, almost over the fire, around which the smoke crept caressingly when it left the perpendicular course. The window-board was curiously stamped with black circles, burnt thereon by the heated bottoms of drinking-cups which had rested there after previously standing on the

hot ashes of the hearth for the purpose of warming their contents, the result giving to the ledge the look of an envelope which has passed through innumerable post-offices.

Fancy was gliding about the room preparing dinner, her head inclining now to the right, now to the left, and singing the tips and ends of tunes that sprang up in her mind like mushrooms. The footsteps of Mrs. Day could be heard in the room overhead. Fancy went finally to the door.

'Father! Dinner.'

A tall spare figure was seen advancing by the window with periodical steps, and the keeper entered from the garden. He appeared to be a man who was always looking down as if trying to recollect something he said yesterday. The surface of his face was fissured rather

than wrinkled, and over and under his eyes were folds which seemed as a kind of exterior eyelids. His nose had been thrown backwards by a blow in a poaching fray, so that when the sun was low and shining in his face people could see far into his head. There was in him a quiet grimness which would in his moments of displeasure have become surliness, had it not been tempered by honesty of soul, and which was often wrongheadedness because not allied with subtlety.

Although not an extraordinarily taciturn man among friends slightly richer than himself, he never wasted words upon outsiders, and to his trapper Enoch his ideas were seldom conveyed by any other means than nods and shakes of the head. Their long acquaintance with each other's ways, and the nature of their labours, rendered words between them almost superfluous as vehicles of thought, whilst the coincidence of their horizons, and the astonishing equality of their social views, by startling the keeper from time to time as very damaging to the theory of master and man, strictly forbade any indulgence in words as courtesies.

Behind the keeper came Enoch (who had been assisting in the garden) at the well-considered chronological distance of three minutes — an interval of non-appearance on the trapper's part not arrived at without some reflection. Four minutes had been found to express indifference to indoor arrangements, and simultaneousness had implied too great an anxiety about meals.

'A little earlier than usual, Fancy,' the keeper said, as he sat down and looked at the clocks. 'That Ezekiel Saunders o' thine is tearing on afore Thomas Wood again.'



'I kept in the middle between them,' said Fancy, also looking at the two clocks.

'Better stick to Thomas,' said her father. 'There's a healthy beat in Thomas that would lead a man to swear by en offhand. He is as true as the town time. How is it your stap-mother isn't here?'

As Fancy was about to reply the rattle of wheels was heard, and 'Weh-heh, Smart!' in Mr. Richard Dewy's voice rolled into the cottage from round the corner of the house.

'Hullo! there's Dewy's cart come for thee, Fancy — Dick driving — afore time, too. Well, ask the lad to have pot-luck with us.'

Dick on entering made a point of implying by his general bearing that he took an interest in Fancy simply as in one of the same race and country as himself; and they all sat down. Dick could have wished her manner had not been so entirely free from all apparent consciousness of those accidental meetings of theirs; but he let the thought pass. Enoch sat diagonally at a table afar off under the corner cupboard, and drank his cider from a long perpendicular pint cup having tall fir-trees done in brown on its sides. He threw occasional remarks into the general tide of conversation, and with this advantage to himself, that he participated in the pleasures of a talk (slight as it was) at meal-times, without saddling himself with the responsibility of sustaining it.

'Why don't your stap-mother come down, Fancy?' said Geoffrey. 'You'll excuse her, Mister Dick, she's a little queer sometimes.'

'O yes, — quite,' said Richard, as if he were in the habit of excusing people every day.

'She d'belong to that class of woman-



kind that become second wives: a rum class rather.'

'Indeed,' said Dick, with sympathy for an indefinite something.

'Yes; and 'tis trying to a female, especially if you've been a first wife, as she have.'

'Very trying it must be.'

'Yes: you see, her first husband was a young man who let her go too far; in fact, she used to kick up Bob's-a-dying at the least thing in the world. And when I'd married her and found it out, I thought, thinks I, "'Tis too late now to begin to cure 'ee;" and so I let her bide. But she's queer, — very queer, at times!'

'I'm sorry to hear that.'

'Yes: there; wives be such a provoking class of society because, though they be never right, they be never more than half wrong.'

Fancy seemed uneasy under the infliction of this household moralizing, which might tend to damage the airy-fairy nature that Dick, as maiden shrewdness told her, had accredited her with. Her dead silence impressed Geoffrey with the notion that something in his words did not agree with

her educated ideas, and he changed the conversation.

'Did Fred Shiner send the cask o' drink, Fancy?'

'I think he did: O yes, he did.'

'Nice solid feller, Fred Shiner!' said Geoffrey to Dick as he helped himself to gravy, bringing the spoon round to his plate by way of the potato-dish, to obviate a stain on the cloth in the event of a spill.

Now Geoffrey's eyes had been fixed upon his plate for the previous four or five minutes, and in removing them he had only carried them to the spoon, which, from its fulness and the distance of its transit, necessitated a steady watching through the whole of the route. Just as intently as the keeper's eyes had been fixed on the spoon Fancy's had been fixed on her father's, without premeditation or the slightest phase of furtiveness; but there they were fastened. This was the reason why:

Dick was sitting next to her on the right side, and on the side of the table opposite to her father. Fancy had laid her right hand lightly down upon the tablecloth for an instant, and to her alarm Dick, after dropping his fork and brushing his forehead as a reason, flung down his own left hand, overlapping a third of Fancy's with it, and keeping it there. So the innocent Fancy, instead of pulling her hand from the trap, settled her eyes on her father's, to guard against his discovery of this perilous game of Dick's. Dick finished his mouthful; Fancy finished her crumb, and nothing was done beyond watching Geoffrey's eyes. Then the hands slid apart; Fancy's going over six inches of cloth, Dick's over one. Geoffrey's eyes had risen.

'I said Fred Shiner is a nice solid feller,' he repeated more emphatically.

'He is; yes, he is,' stammered Dick; 'but to me he is little more than a stranger.'

'O, sure. Now I know en as well as any man can be known. And you know en very well too, don't ye, Fancy?'

Geoffrey put on a tone expressing that these words signified at present about one hundred times the amount of meaning they conveyed literally.

Dick looked anxious.

'Will you pass me some bread?' said Fancy in a flurry, the red of her face becoming slightly disordered, and looking as solicitous as a human being could look about a piece of bread.

'Ay, that I will,' replied the unconscious Geoffrey. 'Ay,' he continued, returning to the displaced idea, 'we are likely to remain friendly wi' Mr. Shiner if the wheels d'run smooth.'

'An excellent thing—a very capital thing, as I should say,' the youth answered with exceeding relevance, considering that his thoughts, instead of following Geoffrey's remark, were nestling at a distance of about two feet on his left the whole time.

'A young woman's face will turn the north wind, Master Richard: my heart if 'twon't.' Dick looked more anxious and was attentive in earnest at these words. 'Yes; turn the north wind,' added Geoffrey after an impressive pause. 'And though she's one of my own flesh and blood. . . .'

'Will you fetch down a bit of raw-mil' cheese from pantry-shelf?' Fancy interrupted as if she were famishing.

'Ay, that I will, chiel; says I, and Mr. Shiner only asking last Saturday night . . . cheese you said, Fancy?'

Dick controlled his emotion at these

mysterious allusions to Mr. Shiner, — the better enabled to do so by perceiving that Fancy's heart went not with her father's — and spoke like a stranger to the affairs of the neighbourhood. 'Yes, there's a great deal to be said upon the power of maiden faces in settling your courses,' he ventured, as the keeper retreated for the cheese.

'The conversation is taking a very strange turn: nothing that *I* have ever done warrants such things being said!' murmured Fancy with emphasis just loud enough to reach Dick's ears.

'You think to yourself, 'twas to be,' cried Enoch from his distant corner, by way of filling up the vacancy caused by Geoffrey's momentary absence. 'And so you marry her, Master Dewy, and there's an end o't.'

'Pray don't say such things, Enoch,' came from Fancy severely, upon which Enoch relapsed into servitude.

'If we be doomed to marry, we marry; if we be doomed to remain single, we do,' replied Dick.

Geoffrey had by this time sat down again, and he now made his lips thin by severely straining them across his gums, and looked out of the window along the vista to the distant highway up Yalbury Hill. 'That's not the case with some folk,' he said at length, as if he read the words on a board at the further end of the vista.

Fancy looked interested, and Dick said, 'No?'

'There's that wife o' mine. It was her doom to be nobody's wife at all in the wide universe. But she made up her mind that she would, and did it twice over. Doom? Doom is nothing beside a elderly woman — quite a chiel in her hands!'

A movement was now heard along

the upstairs passage, and footsteps descending. The door at the foot of the stairs opened and the second Mrs. Day appeared in view, looking fixedly at the table as she advanced towards it, with apparent obliviousness of the presence of any other human being than herself. In short, if the table had been the personages, and the persons the table, her glance would have been the most natural imaginable.

She showed herself to possess an ordinary woman's face, iron-grey hair, hardly any hips, and a great deal of cleanliness in a broad white apron-string as it appeared upon the waist of her dark stuff dress.

'People will run away with a story now, I suppose,' she began saying, 'that Jane Day's tablecloths are as poor and ragged as any union beggar's!'

Dick now perceived that the tablecloth was a little the worse for wear, and reflecting for a moment concluded that 'people' in step-mother language probably meant himself. On lifting his eyes he found that Mrs. Day had vanished again upstairs, and presently returned with an armful of new damask-linen tablecloths folded square and hard as boards by long compression. These she flounced down into a chair; then took one, shook it out from its folds, and spread it on the table by instalments, transferring the plates and dishes one by one from the old to the new cloth.

'And I suppose they'll say, too, that she ha'n't a decent knife and fork in her house!'

'I shouldn't say any such ill-natured thing, I am sure —' began Dick. But Mrs. Day had vanished into the next room. Fancy appeared distressed.

'Very strange woman, isn't she?' said

Geoffrey, quietly going on with his dinner. 'But 'tis too late to attempt curing. My heart! 'tis so growed into her that 'twould kill her to take it out. Ay, she's very queer: you'd be amazed to see what valuable goods we've got stowed away upstairs.'

Back again came Mrs. Day with a box of bright steel horn-handled knives, silver-plated forks, carver, and all complete. These were wiped of the preservative oil which coated them, and then a knife and fork were laid down to each individual with a bang, the carving

knife and fork thrust into the meat dish, and the old ones they had hitherto used tossed away.

Geoffrey placidly cut a slice with the new knife and fork, and asked Dick if he wanted any more.

The table had been spread for the mixed midday meal of dinner and tea which was common among frugal countryfolk. 'The parishioners about here,' continued Mrs. Day, not looking at any living being, but snatching up the brown delf tea-things, 'are the laziest, gossipiest, poachest, jailest set of any ever I came among. And they'll talk about my teapot and tea-things next, I suppose!' She vanished with the teapot, cups, and saucers, and reappeared with a tea-service in white china, and



a packet wrapped in brown paper. This was removed, together with folds of tissue-paper underneath; and a brilliant silver teapot appeared.

'I'll help to put the things right,' said Fancy soothingly, and rising from her seat. 'I ought to have laid out better things, I suppose. But' (here she enlarged her looks so as to include Dick) 'I have been away from home a good deal, and I make shocking blunders in my housekeeping.' Smiles and suavity were then dispensed all around by this bright little bird.

After a little more preparation and modification Mrs. Day took her seat at the head of the table, and during the latter or tea division of the meal presided with much composure. It may

cause some surprise to learn that, now her vagary was over, she showed herself to be an excellent person with much common sense, and even a religious seriousness of tone on matters pertaining to her afflictions.





DICK MAKES HIMSELF USEFUL

CHAPTER VII

THE effect of Geoffrey's incidental allusions to Mr. Shiner was to restrain a considerable flow of spontaneous chat that would otherwise have burst from young Dewy along the drive homeward. And a certain remark he had hazarded to her, in rather too blunt and eager a manner, kept the young lady

herself even more silent than Dick. On both sides there was an unwillingness to talk on any but the most trivial subjects, and their sentences rarely took a larger form than could be expressed in two or three words.

Owing to Fancy being later in the day than she had promised the charwoman had given up expecting her; whereupon Dick could do no less than stay and see her comfortably tided over the disagreeable time of entering and establishing herself in an empty house after an absence of a week. The additional furniture and utensils that had been brought (a canary and cage among the rest) were taken out of the vehicle, and the horse was unharnessed



and put in the plot opposite, where there was some tender grass. Dick lighted the fire already laid; and activity began to loosen their tongues a little.

'There!' said Fancy, 'we forgot to bring the fire-irons!'

She had originally found in her sitting-room, to bear out the expression 'nearly furnished' which the school-manager had used in his letter to her, a table, three chairs, a fender, and a piece of carpet. This 'nearly' had been supplemented hitherto by a kind friend, who had lent her fire-irons and crockery until she should fetch some from home.

Dick attended to the young lady's fire, using his whip-handle for a poker till it was spoilt, and then flourishing a hurdle stick for the remainder of the time.

'The kettle boils; now you shall have a cup of tea,' said Fancy, diving into the hamper she had brought.

'Thank you,' said Dick, whose drive

had made him ready for some, especially in her company.

'Well, here's only one cup-and-saucer, as I breathe! Whatever could mother be thinking about? Do you mind making shift, Mr. Dewy?'

'Not at all, Miss Day,' said that civil person.

'— And only having a cup by itself? or a saucer by itself?'

'Don't mind in the least.'

'Which do you mean by that?'

'I mean the cup if you like the saucer.'

'And the saucer if I like the cup?'

'Exactly, Miss Day.'

'Thank you, Mr. Dewy, for I like the cup decidedly. Stop a minute; there are no spoons now!' She dived into the hamper again, and at the end of two or three minutes looked up and said, 'I suppose you don't mind if I can't find a spoon?'



'Not at all,' said the agreeable Richard.

'The fact is the spoons have slipped down somewhere; right under the other things. O yes, here's one, and only one. You would rather have one than not I suppose, Mr. Dewy?'

'Rather not. I never did care much about spoons.'

'Then I'll have it. I do care about them. You must stir up your tea with a knife. Would you mind lifting the kettle off, that it may not boil dry?'

Dick leapt to the fireplace, and earnestly removed the kettle.

'There! you did it so wildly that you have made your hand black. We always use kettle-holders; didn't you learn housewifery as far as that, Mr. Dewy? Well, never mind the soot on your hand. Come here. I am going to rinse mine, too.'

They went to a basin she had placed in the back room. 'This is the only basin I have,' she said. 'Turn up your sleeves, and by that time my hands will be washed, and you can come.'

Her hands were in the water now. 'O, how vexing!' she exclaimed. 'There's not a drop of water left for you unless you draw it, and the well is I don't know how many furlongs deep; all that was in the pitcher I used for the kettle and this basin. Do you mind dipping the tips of your fingers in the same?'

'Not at all. And to save time I won't wait till you have done, if you have no objection?'

Thereupon he plunged in his hands, and they paddled together. It being the first time in his life that he had touched female fingers under water, Dick duly registered the sensation as rather a nice one.

'Really, I hardly know which are my

own hands and which are yours, they have got so mixed up together,' she said, withdrawing her own very suddenly.

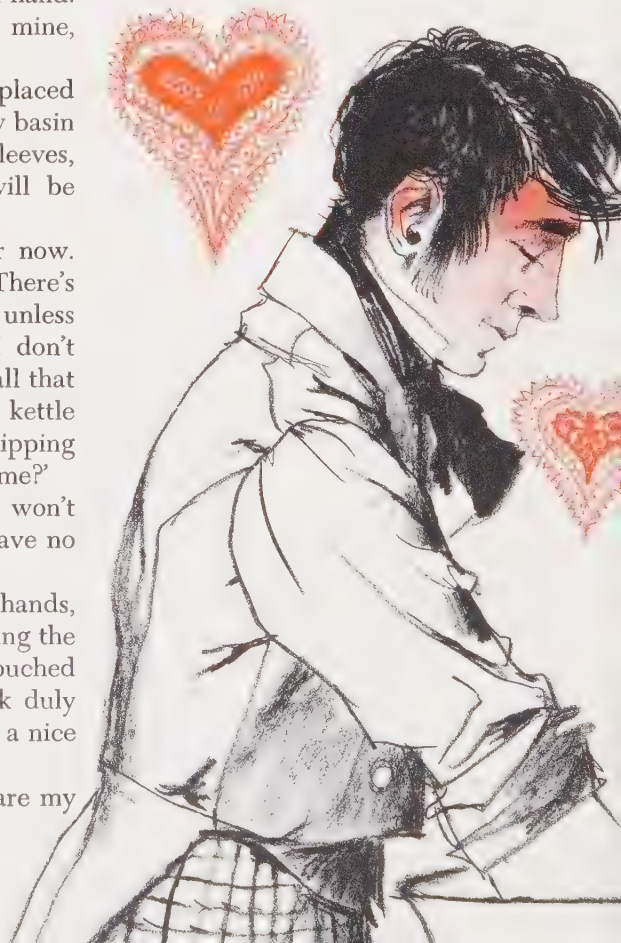
'It doesn't matter at all,' said Dick, 'at least as far as I am concerned.'

'There! no towel! Whoever thinks of a towel till the hands are wet?'

'Nobody.'

'"Nobody." How very dull it is when people are so friendly! Come here, Mr. Dewy. Now do you think you could lift the lid of that box with your elbow, and then, with something or other, take out a towel you will find under the clean clothes? Be *sure* don't touch any of them with your wet hands, for the things at the top are all Starched and Ironed.'

Dick managed by the aid of a knife



and fork to extract a towel from under a muslin dress without wetting the latter; and for a moment he ventured to assume a tone of criticism.

'I fear for that dress,' he said, as they wiped their hands together.

'What?' said Miss Day, looking into the box at the dress alluded to. 'O, I know what you mean—that the vicar will never let me wear muslin?'

'Yes.'

'Well, I know it is condemned by all orders in the church as flaunting, and unfit for common wear for girls who've their living to get; but we'll see.'

'In the interest of the church I hope you don't speak seriously.'

'Yes, I do; but we'll see.' There was a comely determination on her lip, very

pleasant to a beholder who was neither bishop, priest, nor deacon. 'I think I can manage any vicar's views about me if he's under forty.'

Dick rather wished she had never thought of managing vicars.

'I certainly shall be glad to get some of your delicious tea,' he said in rather a free way, yet modestly, as became one in a position between that of visitor and inmate, and looking wistfully at his lonely saucer.

'So shall I. Now is there anything else we want, Mr. Dewy?'

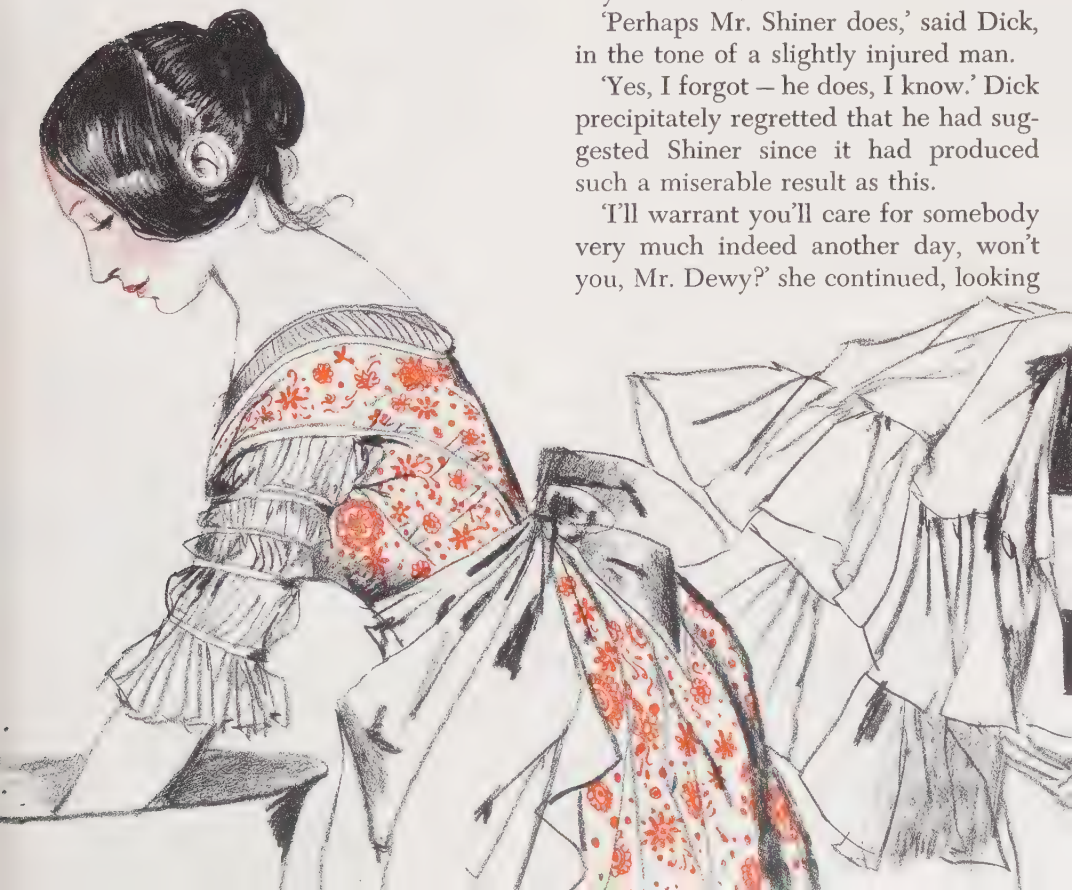
'I really think there's nothing else, Miss Day.'

She prepared to sit down, looking musingly out of the window at Smart's enjoyment of the rich grass. 'Nobody seems to care about me,' she murmured, with large lost eyes fixed upon the sky beyond Smart.

'Perhaps Mr. Shiner does,' said Dick, in the tone of a slightly injured man.

'Yes, I forgot—he does, I know.' Dick precipitately regretted that he had suggested Shiner since it had produced such a miserable result as this.

'I'll warrant you'll care for somebody very much indeed another day, won't you, Mr. Dewy?' she continued, looking





very feelingly into the mathematical centre of his eyes.

'Ah, I'll warrant I shall,' said Dick, feelingly too, and looking back into her dark pupils, whereupon they were turned aside.

'I meant,' she went on, preventing him from speaking just as he was going to narrate a forcible story about his feelings; 'I meant that nobody comes to see if I have returned — not even the vicar.'

'If you want to see him, I'll call at the vicarage directly we have had some tea.'

'No, no! Don't let him come down here, whatever you do, whilst I am in such a state of disarrangement. Parsons

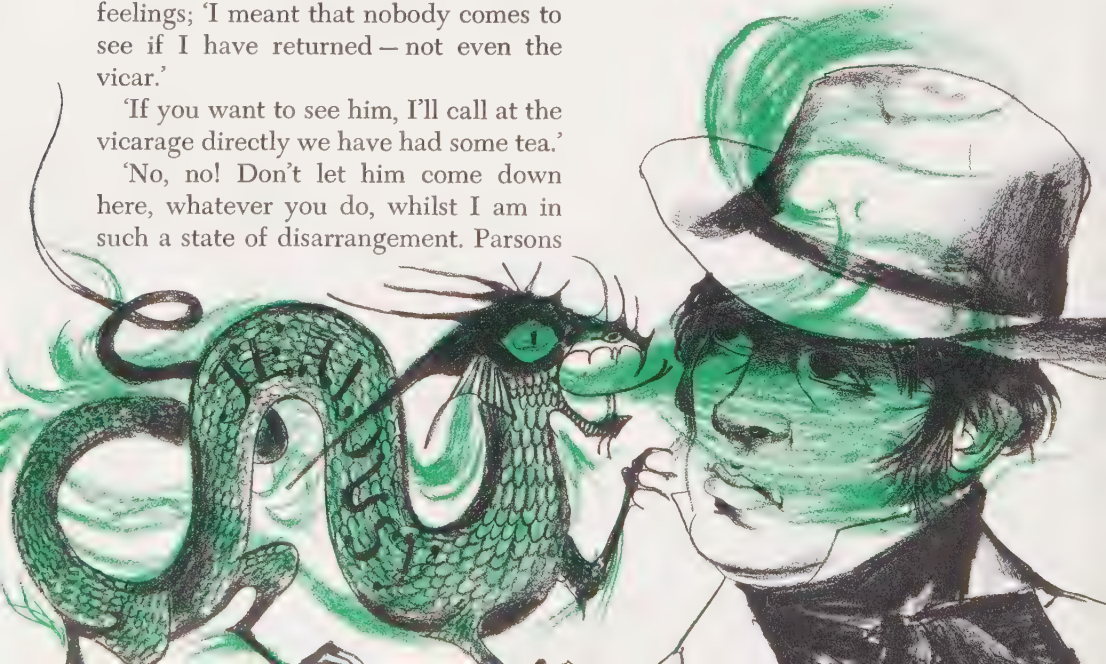
look so miserable and awkward when one's house is in a muddle; walking about and making impossible suggestions in quaint academic phrases till your flesh creeps and you wish them dead. Do you take sugar?'

Mr. Maybold was at this instant seen coming up the path.

'There! That's he coming! How I wish you were not here! — that is, how awkward — dear, dear!' she exclaimed, with a quick ascent of blood to her face, and irritated with Dick rather than the vicar, as it seemed.

'Pray don't be alarmed on my account, Miss Day — good-afternoon!' said Dick in a huff, putting on his hat and leaving the room hastily by the back-door.

The horse was caught and put in, and on mounting the shafts to start he saw through the window the vicar, standing upon some books piled in a chair, and driving a nail into the wall; Fancy, with a demure glance, holding the canary-cage up to him as if she had never in her life thought of anything but vicars and canaries.





DICK MEETS HIS FATHER

CHAPTER VIII

FOR several minutes Dick drove along homeward, with the inner eye of reflection so anxiously set on his passages at arms with Fancy that the road and scenery were as a thin mist over the real pictures of his mind. Was she a coquette? The balance between the evidence that she did love him and that she did not was so nicely struck that his opinion had no stability. She had let him put his hand upon hers; she had allowed her gaze to drop plumb into the depths of his — his into hers — three or four times; her manner had been very free with regard to the basin and towel; she had appeared vexed at the mention of Shiner. On the other hand, she had driven him about the house like a quiet dog or cat, said Shiner cared for her, and seemed anxious that Mr. Maybold should do the same.

Thinking thus as he neared the hand-post at Mellstock Cross, sitting on the

front board of the spring-cart — his legs on the outside, and his whole frame jiggling up and down like a candle-flame to the time of Smart's trotting — who should he see coming down the hill but his father in the light wagon, quivering up and down on a smaller scale of shakes, those merely caused by the stones in the road. They were soon crossing each other's front.

'Weh-hey!' said the tranter to Smiler.

'Weh-hey!' said Dick to Smart, in an echo of the same voice.

'Th'st hauled her back, I suppose?' Reuben inquired peaceably.

'Yes,' said Dick, with such a clinching period at the end that it seemed he was never going to add another word. Smiler, thinking this the close of the conversation, prepared to move on.

'Wey-hey!' said the tranter. 'I tell thee what it is, Dick. That there maid is taking up thy thoughts more than's good

for thee, my sonny. Thou'rt never happy now unless th'rt making thyself miserable about her in one way or another.'

'I don't know about that, father,' said Dick rather stupidly.

'But I do — Wey, Smiler! — 'Od rot the women, 'tis nothing else wi' 'em nowadays but getting young men and leading 'em astray.'

'Pooh, father! you just repeat what all the common world says: that's all you do.'

'The world's a very sensible feller on things in jinerl, Dick; very sensible indeed.'

Dick looked into the distance at a vast expanse of mortgaged estate. 'I wish I was as rich as a squire when he's as poor as a crow,' he murmured; 'I'd soon ask Fancy something.'

'I wish so too, wi' all my heart, sonny; that I do. Well, mind what beest about, that's all.'

Smart moved on a step or two. 'Supposing now, father, — We-hey, Smart! — I did think a little about her, and I had a chance, which I ha'n't; don't you think she's a very good sort of — of — one?'

'Ay, good; she's good enough. When you've made up your mind to marry, take the first respectable body that comes to hand — she's as good as any other; they be all alike in the ground-work; 'tis only in the flourishes there's a difference. She's good enough; but I can't see what the nation a young feller like you — wi' a comfortable house and home, and father and mother to take care o' thee, and who sent 'ee to a school so good that 'twas hardly fair to the other children — should want to go hollering after a young woman for, when she's quietly making a husband in her pocket, and not troubled by chick nor chiel, to make a poverty-stric' wife and

family of her, and neither hat, cap, wig, nor waistcoat to set 'em up with: be drowned if I can see it, and that's the long and short o't, my sonny!'

Dick looked at Smart's ears, then up the hill; but no reason was suggested by any object that met his gaze.

'For about the same reason that you did, father, I suppose.'

'Dang it, my sonny, thou'st got me there!' And the tranter gave vent to a grim admiration, with the mien of a man who was too magnanimous not to appreciate artistically a slight rap on the knuckles, even if they were his own.

'Whether or no,' said Dick, 'I asked her a thing going along the road.'

'Come to that, is it? Turk! won't thy mother be in a taking! Well, she's ready, I don't doubt?'

'I didn't ask her anything about having me; and if you'll let me speak, I'll tell 'ee what I want to know. I just said, Did she care about me?'

'Piph-ph-ph!'

'And then she said nothing for a quarter of a mile, and then she said she didn't know. Now, what I want to know is, what was the meaning of that speech?' The latter words were spoken resolutely, as if he didn't care for the ridicule of all the fathers in creation.

'The meaning of that speech is,' the tranter replied deliberately, 'that the meaning is meant to be rather hid at present. Well, Dick, as an honest father to thee, I don't pretend to deny what you d'know well enough; that is, that her father being rather better in the pocket than we, I should welcome her ready enough if it must be somebody.'

'But what d'ye think she really did mean,' said the unsatisfied Dick.

'I'm afeard I am not o' much account in guessing, especially as I was not there

when she said it, and seeing that your mother was the only 'ooman I ever cam' into such close quarters as that with.'

'And what did mother say to you when you asked her?' said Dick musingly.

'I don't see that that will help 'ee.'

'The principle is the same.'

'Well — ay: what did she say? Let's see. I was oiling my working-day boots without taking 'em off, and wi' my head hanging down, when she just brushed on by the garden hatch like a fluttering leaf. "Ann," I said says I, and then, — but, Dick, I'm afeard 'twill be no help to thee; for we were such a rum couple, your mother and I, leastways one half was, that is myself — and your mother's charms was more in the manner than the material.'

'Never mind! "Ann," said you.'

'"Ann," said I, as I was saying . . .

"Ann," I said to her when I was oiling my working-day boots wi' my head hanging down, "Woot hae me?" . . . What came next I can't quite call up at this distance o' time. Perhaps your mother would know, — she's got a better memory for her little triumphs than I. However, the long and the short o' the story is that we were married somehow, as I found afterwards. 'Twas on White Tuesday, — Mellstock Club walked the same day, every man two and two, and a fine day 'twas, — hot as fire; how the sun did strike down upon my back going to church! I well can mind what a bath o' sweating I was in, body and soul! But Fance will ha' thee, Dick — she won't walk with another chap — no such good luck.'

'I don't know about that,' said Dick, whipping at Smart's flank in a fanciful way which, as Smart knew, meant nothing in connection with going on. 'There's



Pa'son Maybold, too — that's all against me.'

'What about he? She's never been stuffing into thy innocent heart that he's in love with her? Lord, the vanity o' maidens!'

'No, no. But he called, and she looked at him in such a way, and at me in such a way — quite different the ways were, — and as I was coming off there was he hanging up her birdcage.'

'Well, why shouldn't the man hang up her birdcage? Turk seize it all, what's that got to do wi' it? Dick, that thou beest a white-lyvered chap I don't say, but if thou beestn't as mad as a cappel-faced bull let me smile no more.'

'O, ay.'

'And what's think now, Dick?'

'I don't know.'

'Here's another pretty kettle o' fish for thee. Who d'ye think's the bitter weed

in our being turned out? Did our party tell 'ee?'

'No. Why, Pa'son Maybold, I suppose.'

'Shiner, — because he's in love with thy young woman, and d'want to see her young figure sitting up at that queer instrument, and her young fingers rumstrumming upon the keys.'

A sharp ado of sweet and bitter was going on in Dick during this communication from his father. 'Shiner's a fool — no, that's not it; I don't believe any such thing, father. Why, Shiner would never take a bold step like that unless she'd been a little made up to, and had taken it kindly. Pooh!'

'Who's to say she didn't?'

'I do.'

'The more fool you.'

'Why, father of me?'

'Has she ever done more to thee?'

'No.'

'Then she has done as much to he — rot 'em! Now, Dick, this is how a maid is. She'll swear she's dying for thee, and she is dying for thee, and she will die for thee; but she'll fling a look over t'other shoulder at another young feller, though never leaving off dying for thee just the same.'

'She's not dying for me, and so she didn't fling a look at him.'

'But she may be dying for him, for she looked at thee.'

'I don't know what to make of it at all,' said Dick gloomily.

'All I can make of it is,' the tranter said, raising his whip, arranging his different joints and muscles, and motioning to the horse to move on, 'that if you can't read a maid's mind by her motions, nature d'seem to say thou'st ought to be a bachelor. Clk, clk! Smiler!' And the tranter moved on.

Dick held Smart's rein firmly, and the whole concern of horse, cart, and man remained rooted in the lane. How long this condition would have lasted is unknown, had not Dick's thoughts, after adding up numerous items of misery, gradually wandered round to the fact that as something must be done it could not be done by staying there all night.

Reaching home he went up to his bedroom, shut the door as if he were going to be seen no more in this life, and taking a sheet of paper and uncorking the ink-bottle he began a letter. The dignity of the writer's mind was so powerfully apparent in every line of this effusion that it obscured the logical sequence of facts and intentions to an appreciable degree; and it was not at all clear to a reader whether he there and then left off loving Miss Fancy Day; whether he had never loved her seriously and never meant to; whether he had been dying up to the present moment and now intended to get well again; or whether he had hitherto been in good health and intended to die for her forthwith.

He put this letter in an envelope, sealed it up, directed it in a stern handwriting of straight dashes — easy flourishes being rigorously excluded. He walked with it in his pocket down the lane in strides not an inch less than three feet long. Reaching her gate he put on a resolute expression — then put it off again, turned back homeward, tore up his letter, and sat down.

That letter was altogether in a wrong tone — that he must own. A heartless man-of-the-world tone was what the juncture required. That he rather wanted her, and rather did not want her — the latter for choice; but that as a member of society he didn't mind mak-

ing a query in jaunty terms, which could only be answered in the same way: did she mean anything by her bearing towards him, or did she not?

This letter was considered so satisfactory in every way that, being put into the hands of a little boy and the order given that he was to run with it to the school, he was told in addition not to look behind him if Dick called after him to bring it back, but to run along with it just the same. Having taken this precaution against vacillation Dick watched his messenger down the road, and turned into the house whistling an air in such ghastly jerks and starts that whistling seemed to be the act the very furthest removed from that which was instinctive in such a youth.

The letter was left as ordered: the next morning came and passed — and no answer. The next. The next. Friday night came. Dick resolved that if no answer or sign were given by her the next day, on Sunday he would meet her face to face, and have it all out by word of mouth.

‘Dick,’ said his father, coming in from the garden at that moment — in each hand a hive of bees tied in a cloth to prevent their egress — ‘I think you’d



better take these two swarms of bees to Mrs. Maybold’s to-morrow, instead o’ me, and I’ll go wi’ Smiler and the wagon.’

It was a relief; for Mrs. Maybold, the vicar’s mother, who had just taken into her head a fancy for keeping bees (pleasantly disguised under the pretence of its being an economical wish to produce her own honey), lived near the watering-place of Budmouth Regis, ten miles off, and the business of transporting the hives thither would occupy the whole day, and to some extent annihilate the vacant time between this evening and the coming Sunday. The best spring-cart was washed throughout, the axles oiled, and the bees placed therein for the journey.

Discussion

1. Explain briefly the chapter titles.
2. Interpret this statement: “Then the music is second to the woman, the other churchwarden is second to Shiner, the pa’son is second to the churchwardens, and God A’mighty is nowhere at all.”
3. On what basis is Geoffrey Day assumed to be a clever man? To what extent is it a sound assumption?
4. Explain the comments about being born “for fortune” and “to fortune” at the end of Chapter V.
5. Compare Dick’s two letters to Fancy. What happens to each?



PART THE THIRD
SUMMER

DRIVING OUT OF BUDMOUTH

CHAPTER I

AN easy bend of neck and graceful set of head; full and wavy bundles of dark-brown hair; light fall of little feet; pretty devices on the skirt of the dress; clear deep eyes; in short, a bunch of sweets: it was Fancy! Dick's heart went round to her with a rush.

The scene was the corner of Mary Street in Budmouth Regis, near the King's statue, at which point the white angle of the last house in the row cut perpendicularly an embayed and nearly motionless expanse of salt water projected from the outer ocean—to-day lit in bright tones of green and opal. Dick and Smart had just emerged from the street, and there on the right, against the brilliant sheet of liquid colour, stood Fancy Day; and she turned and recognized him.

Dick suspended his thoughts of the letter and wonder at how she came

there by driving close to the chains of the Esplanade—incontinently displacing two chairmen, who had just come to life for the summer in new clean shirts and revived clothes, and being almost displaced in turn by a rigid boy rattling along with a baker's cart and looking neither to the right nor the left. He asked if she were going to Mellstock that night.

'Yes, I'm waiting for the carrier,' she replied, seeming, too, to suspend thoughts of the letter.

'Now I can drive you home nicely, and you save half an hour. Will ye come with me?'

As Fancy's power to will anything seemed to have departed in some mysterious manner at that moment, Dick settled the matter by getting out and assisting her into the vehicle without another word.

The temporary flush upon her cheek changed to a lesser hue which was permanent, and at length their eyes met; there was present between them a certain feeling of embarrassment, which arises at such moments when all the instinctive acts dictated by the position have been performed. Dick, being engaged with the reins, thought less of this awkwardness than did Fancy, who had nothing to do but to feel his presence, and to be more and more conscious of the fact that by accepting a seat beside him in this way she succumbed to the tone of his note. Smart jogged along, and Dick jogged, and the helpless Fancy necessarily jogged too; and she felt that she was in a measure captured and made a prisoner.

'I am so much obliged to you for your company, Miss Day,' he observed, as they drove past the two semicircular bays of the Old Royal Hotel, where His Majesty King George the Third had many a time attended the balls of the burgesses.

To Miss Day, crediting him with the

same consciousness of mastery — a consciousness of which he was perfectly innocent — this remark sounded like a magnanimous intention to soothe her, the captive.

'I didn't come for the pleasure of obliging you with my company,' she said.

The answer had an unexpected manner of incivility in it that must have been rather surprising to young Dewy. At the same time it may be observed that when a young woman returns a rude answer to a young man's civil remark her heart is in a state which argues rather hopefully for his case than otherwise.

There was silence between them till they had left the sea-front and passed about twenty of the trees that ornamented the road leading up out of the town towards Casterbridge and Mellstock.

'Though I didn't come for that purpose either, I would have done it,' said Dick at the twenty-first tree.

'Now, Mr. Dewy, no flirtation, be-



cause it's wrong, and I don't wish it.'

Dick seated himself afresh just as he had been sitting before, arranged his looks very emphatically, and cleared his throat.

'Really, anybody would think you had met me on business and were just going to commence,' said the lady intractably.

'Lots of things have happened to you this spring, I see.'

'What have you seen?'

'O, nothing; I've heard, I mean!'

'What have you heard?'

'The name of a pretty man with brass studs, and a copper ring, and a tin watch-chain, a little mixed up with your own. That's all.'



'Yes, they would.'

'Why, you never have, to be sure!'

This was a shaky beginning. He chopped round and said cheerily, as a man who had resolved never to spoil his jollity by loving one of womankind —

'Well, how are you getting on, Miss Day, at the present time? Gaily, I don't doubt for a moment.'

'I am not gay, Dick; you know that.'

'Gaily doesn't mean decked in gay dresses.'

'I didn't suppose gaily was gaily dressed. Mighty me, what a scholar you've grown!'

'That's a very unkind picture of Mr. Shiner, for that's who you mean! The studs are gold as you know, and it's a real silver chain; the ring I can't conscientiously defend, and he only wore it once.'

'He might have worn it a hundred times without showing it half so much.'

'Well, he's nothing to me,' she serenely observed.

'Not any more than I am?'

'Now, Mr. Dewy,' said Fancy severely, 'certainly he isn't any more to me than you are!'

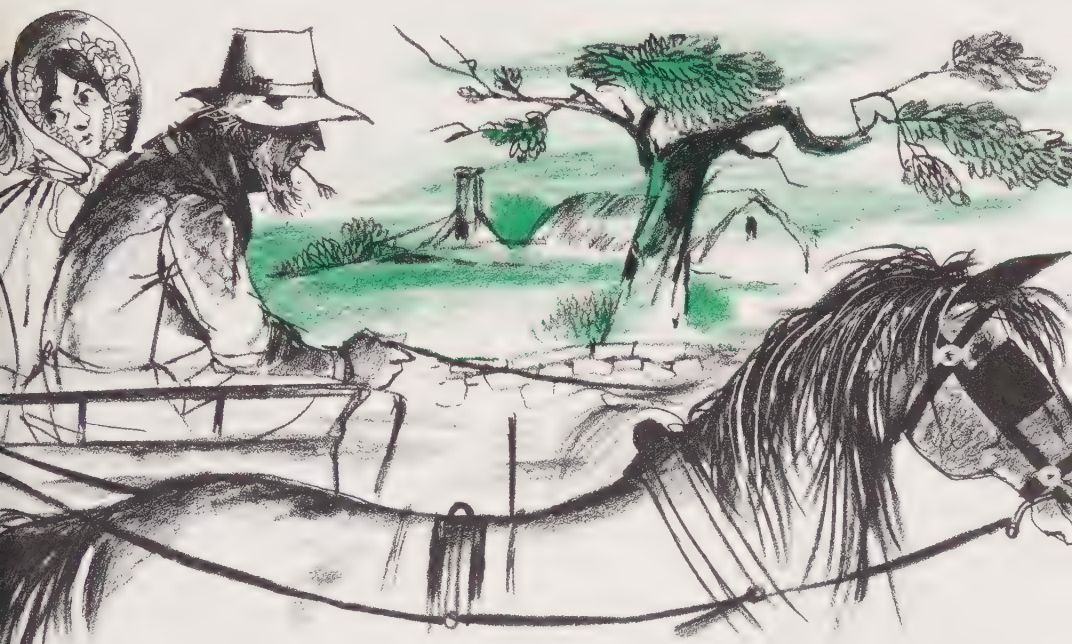
'Not so much?'

She looked aside to consider the precise compass of that question. 'That I can't exactly answer,' she replied with soft archness.

As they were going rather slowly another spring-cart, containing a farmer, farmer's wife, and farmer's man, jogged past them; and the farmer's wife and farmer's man eyed the couple very curi-

ously. The farmer never looked up from the horse's tail.

'Fancy, why can't you answer?' he repeated.



ously. The farmer never looked up from the horse's tail.

'Why can't you exactly answer?' said Dick, quickening Smart a little, and jogging on just behind the farmer and farmer's wife and man.

As no answer came, and as their eyes had nothing else to do, they both contemplated the picture presented in front, and noticed how the farmer's wife sat flattened between the two men, who bulged over each end of the seat to give her room till they almost sat upon their respective wheels; and they looked too at the farmer's wife's silk

'Because how much you are to me depends upon how much I am to you,' said she in low tones.

'Everything,' said Dick, putting his hand towards hers and casting emphatic eyes upon the upper curve of her cheek.

'Now, Richard Dewy, no touching me! I didn't say in what way your thinking of me affected the question—perhaps inversely, don't you see? No touching, sir! Look; goodness me, don't, Dick!'

The cause of her sudden start was the unpleasant appearance over Dick's

right shoulder of an empty timber-wagon and four journeymen-carpenters reclining in lazy postures inside it, their eyes directed upwards at various oblique angles into the surrounding world, the chief object of their existence being apparently to criticize to the very backbone and marrow every animate object that came within the compass of their vision. This difficulty of Dick's was overcome by trotting on till the wagon and carpenters were beginning to look rather misty by reason of a film of dust that accompanied their wagon-wheels and rose around their heads like a fog.

'Say you love me, Fancy.'

'No, Dick, certainly not; 'tisin't time to do that yet.'

'Why, Fancy?'

'"Miss Day" is better at present — don't mind my saying so; and I ought not to have called you Dick.'

'Nonsense! when you know that I would do anything on earth for your love. Why, you make any one think that loving is a thing that can be done and undone, and put on and put off at a mere whim.'

'No, no, I don't,' she said gently; 'but there are things which tell me I ought not to give way to much thinking about you, even if —'

'But you want to, don't you? Yes, say you do; it is best to be truthful. Whatever they may say about a woman's right to conceal where her love lies, and pretend it doesn't exist, and things like that, it is not best; I do know it, Fancy. And an honest woman in that, as well as in all her daily concerns, shines most brightly, and is thought most of in the long-run.'

'Well, then, perhaps, Dick, I do love you a little,' she whispered tenderly; 'but I wish you wouldn't say any more now.'

'I won't say any more now, then, if you don't like it, dear. But you do love me a little, don't you?'

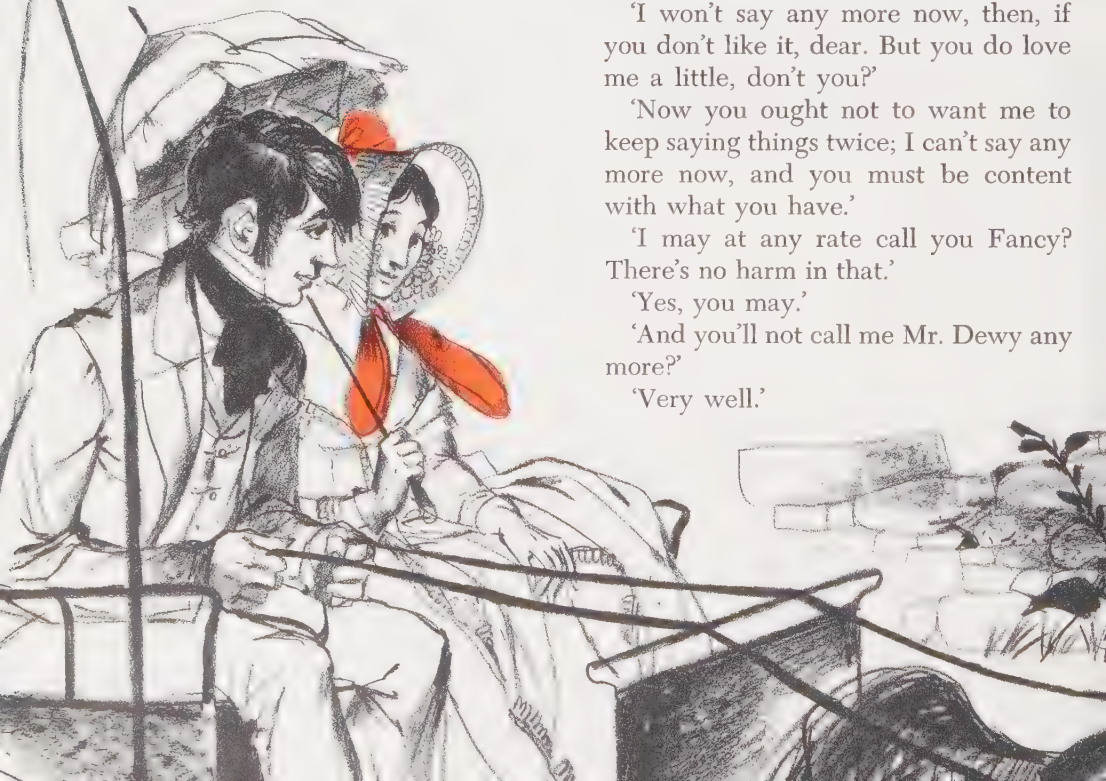
'Now you ought not to want me to keep saying things twice; I can't say any more now, and you must be content with what you have.'

'I may at any rate call you Fancy? There's no harm in that.'

'Yes, you may.'

'And you'll not call me Mr. Dewy any more?'

'Very well.'



FURTHER ALONG THE ROAD

CHAPTER II

Dick's spirits having risen in the course of these admissions of his sweetheart he now touched Smart with the whip; and on Smart's neck, not far behind his ears. Smart, who had been lost in thought for some time, never dreaming that Dick could reach so far with a whip which, on this particular journey, had never been extended further than his flank, tossed his head and scampered along with exceeding briskness, which was very pleasant to the young couple behind him till, turning a bend in the road, they came instantly upon the farmer, farmer's man, and farmer's wife with the flapping mantle, all jogging on just the same as ever.

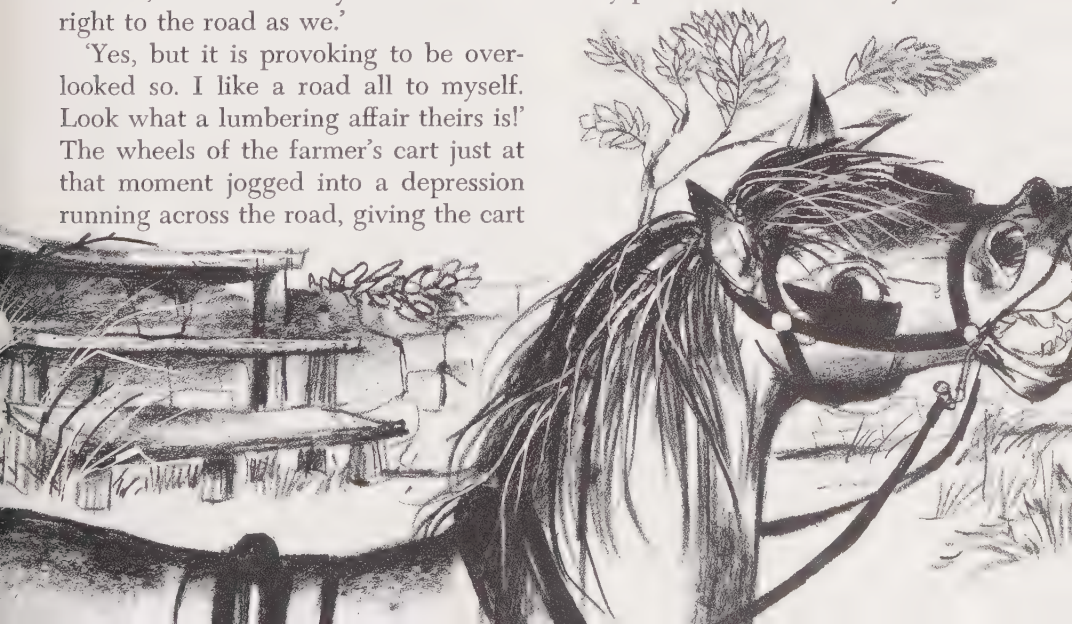
'Bother those people! Here we are upon them again.'

'Well, of course. They have as much right to the road as we.'

'Yes, but it is provoking to be overlooked so. I like a road all to myself. Look what a lumbering affair theirs is! The wheels of the farmer's cart just at that moment jogged into a depression running across the road, giving the cart

a twist, whereupon all three nodded to the left, and on coming out of it all three nodded to the right, and went on jerking their backs in and out as usual. 'We'll pass them when the road gets wider.'

When an opportunity seemed to offer itself for carrying this intention into effect they heard light flying wheels behind, and on their quartering there whizzed along past them a brand-new gig, so brightly polished that the spokes of the wheels sent forth a continual quivering light at one point in their circle, and all the panels glared like mirrors in Dick and Fancy's eyes. The driver, and owner as it appeared, was really a handsome man; his companion was Shiner. Both turned round as they passed Dick and Fancy and stared





with bold admiration in her face till they were obliged to attend to the operation of passing the farmer. Dick glanced for an instant at Fancy while she was undergoing their scrutiny; then returned to his driving with rather a sad countenance.

'Why are you so silent?' she said after a while, with real concern.

'Nothing.'

'Yes, it is, Dick. I couldn't help those people passing.'

'I know that.'

'You look offended with me. What have I done?'

'I can't tell without offending you.'

'Better out.'

'Well,' said Dick, who seemed longing to tell even at the risk of offending her, 'I was thinking how different you in love are from me in love. Whilst those men were staring you dismissed me from your thoughts altogether and —'

'You can't offend me further now; tell all!'

'And showed upon your face a pleased sense of being attractive to 'em.'

'Don't be silly, Dick! You know very well I didn't.'

Dick shook his head sceptically and smiled.



'Dick, I always believe flattery *if possible* — and it was possible then. Now there's an open confession of weakness. But I showed no consciousness of it.'

Dick, perceiving by her look that she would adhere to her statement, charitably forbore saying anything that could make her prevaricate. The sight of Shiner, too, had recalled another branch of the subject to his mind; that which had been his greatest trouble till her company and words had obscured its probability.

'By the way, Fancy, do you know why our quire is to be dismissed?'

'No: except that it is Mr. Maybold's wish for me to play the organ.'

'Do you know how it came to be his wish?'

'That I don't.'

'Mr. Shiner, being churchwarden, has persuaded the vicar; who, however, was willing enough before. Shiner, I know, is crazy to see you playing every Sunday; I suppose he'll turn over your music, for the organ will be close to his pew. But — I know you have never encouraged him?'

'Never once!' said Fancy emphatically, and with eyes full of earnest truth. 'I don't like him indeed, and I never heard of his doing this before! I have always felt that I should like to play in a church, but I never wished to turn you and your choir out; and I never even said that I could play till I was asked. You don't think for a moment that I did, surely, do you?'

'I know you didn't, dear.'

'Or that I care the least morsel of a bit for him?'

'I know you don't.'

The distance between Budmouth and Mellstock was ten or eleven miles, and there being a good inn, 'The Ship', four miles out of Budmouth, with a mast and cross-trees in front, Dick's custom in driving thither was to divide his journey into three stages by resting at this inn going and coming, and not troubling the Budmouth stables at all, whenever his visit to the town was a mere call and deposit, as to-day.

Fancy was ushered into a little tea-room and Dick went to the stables to see to the feeding of Smart. In face of the significant twitches of feature that were visible in the ostler and labouring men idling around, Dick endeavoured to look unconscious of the fact that there was any sentiment between him and Fancy beyond a tranter's desire to carry a passenger home. He presently entered the inn and opened the door of Fancy's room.

'Dick, do you know, it has struck me that it is rather awkward my being here alone with you like this. I don't think you had better come in with me.'

'That's rather unpleasant, dear.'

'Yes, it is, and I wanted you to have some tea as well as myself too, because you must be tired.'

'Well, let me have some with you, then. I was denied once before, if you recollect, Fancy.'

'Yes, yes, never mind! And it seems unfriendly of me now, but I don't know what to do.'

'It shall be as you say, then.' Dick began to retreat with a dissatisfied wrinking of face, and a farewell glance at the cosy tea-tray.

'But you don't see how it is, Dick,

when you speak like that,' she said with more earnestness than she had ever shown before. 'You do know that even if I care very much for you I must remember that I have a difficult position to maintain. The vicar would not like me, as his schoolmistress, to indulge in a *tête-à-tête* anywhere with anybody.'

'But I am not *any* body!' exclaimed Dick.

'No, no, I mean with a young man'; and she added softly, 'unless I were really engaged to be married to him.'

'Is that all? Then, dearest, dearest, why, we'll be engaged at once, to be sure we will, and down I sit! There it is, as easy as a glove!'

'Ah! but suppose I won't! And, goodness me, what have I done!' she faltered, getting very red. 'Positively, it seems as if I meant you to say that!'

'Let's do it! I mean get engaged,' said Dick. 'Now, Fancy, will you be my wife?'

'Do you know, Dick, it was rather unkind of you to say what you did coming along the road,' she remarked as if she had not heard the latter part of his speech; though an acute observer might have noticed about her breast as the word 'wife' fell from Dick's lips a soft silent escape of breaths, with very short rests between each.

'What did I say?'

'About my trying to look attractive to those men in the gig.'

'You couldn't help looking so, whether you tried or no. And, Fancy, you do care for me?'

'Yes.'

'Very much?'

'Yes.'

'And you'll be my own wife?'

Her heart quickened, adding to and withdrawing from her cheek varying



tones of red to match each varying thought. Dick looked expectantly at the ripe tint of her delicate mouth, waiting for what was coming forth.

'Yes — if father will let me.'

Dick drew himself close to her, compressing his lips and pouting them out as if he were about to whistle the softest melody known.

'O no!' said Fancy solemnly.

The modest Dick drew back a little.

'Dick, Dick, kiss me and let me go instantly! — here's somebody coming!' she whisperingly exclaimed.

Half an hour afterwards Dick emerged from the inn, and if Fancy's lips had been real cherries probably Dick's would have appeared deeply stained. The landlord was standing in the yard.

'Heu-heu! hay-hay, Master Dewy? Ho-ho!' he laughed, letting the laugh slip out gently and by degrees that it might make little noise in its exit, and smiting Dick under the fifth rib at the same time. 'This will never do, upon my life, Master Dewy! calling for tay

for a feymel passenger, and then going in and sitting down and having some too, and biding such a fine long time!

'But surely you know?' said Dick, with great apparent surprise. 'Yes, yes! Ha-ha!' smiting the landlord under the ribs in return.

'Why, what? Yes, yes; ha-ha!'

'You know, of course!'

'Yes, of course! But — that is — I don't.'

'Why about — between that young lady and me?' nodding to the window of the room that Fancy occupied.

'No; not I!' said the innkeeper, bringing his eyes into circles.

'And you don't!'

'Not a word, I'll take my oath!'

'But you laughed when I laughed.'

'Ay, that was me sympathy; so did you when I laughed!'



'Really, you don't know? Goodness — not knowing that!'

'I'll take my oath I don't!'

'O yes,' said Dick, with frigid rhetoric of pitying astonishment, 'we're engaged to be married, you see, and I naturally look after her.'

'Of course, of course! I didn't know that, and I hope ye'll excuse any little freedom of mine, Mr. Dewy. But it is a very odd thing; I was talking to your father very intimate about family matters only last Friday in the world, and who should come in but Keeper Day, and we all then fell a-talking o' family matters; but neither one o' them said a mortal word about it; knowen me too so many years, and I at your father's own wedding. 'Tisn't what I should have expected from an old neighbour!'

'Well, to say the truth, we hadn't told father of the engagement at that time; in fact, 'twasn't settled.'

'Ah! the business was done Sunday. Yes, yes, Sunday's the courting day. Heu-heu!'

'No, 'twasn't done Sunday in particular.'

'After school-hours this week? Well, a very good time, a very proper good time.'

'O no, 'twasn't done then.'

'Coming along the road to-day then, I suppose?'

'Not at all; I wouldn't think of getting engaged in a dog-cart.'

'Dammy — might as well have said at once the *when* be blowed! Anyhow, 'tis a fine day, and I hope next time you'll come as one.'

Fancy was duly brought out and assisted into the vehicle, and the newly affianced youth and maiden passed up the steep hill to the Ridgeway, and vanished in the direction of Mellstock.

A CONFESSION

CHAPTER III

It was a morning of the latter summer-time; a morning of lingering dews, when the grass is never dry in the shade. Fuchsias and dahlias were laden till eleven o'clock with small drops and dashes of water, changing the colour of their sparkle at every movement of the air; and elsewhere hanging on twigs like small silver fruit. The threads of garden-spiders appeared thick and polished. In the dry and sunny places dozens of long-legged crane-flies whizzed off the grass at every step the passer took.

Fancy Day and her friend Susan Dewy the tranter's daughter were in such a spot as this, pulling down a bough laden with early apples. Three months had elapsed since Dick and Fancy had journeyed together from Budmouth, and the course of their love had run on vigorously during the whole time. There had been just enough difficulty attending its development, and just enough finesse required in keeping it private, to lend the passion an ever-increasing freshness on Fancy's part, whilst, whether from these accessories or not, Dick's heart had been at all times as fond as could be desired. But there was a cloud on Fancy's horizon now.

'She is so well off — better than any of us,' Susan Dewy was saying. 'Her father farms five hundred acres, and she might marry a doctor or curate or any-



thing of that kind if she contrived a little.'

'I don't think Dick ought to have gone to that gipsy-party at all when he knew I couldn't go,' replied Fancy uneasily.

'He didn't know that you would not be there till it was too late to refuse the invitation,' said Susan.

'And what was she like? Tell me.'

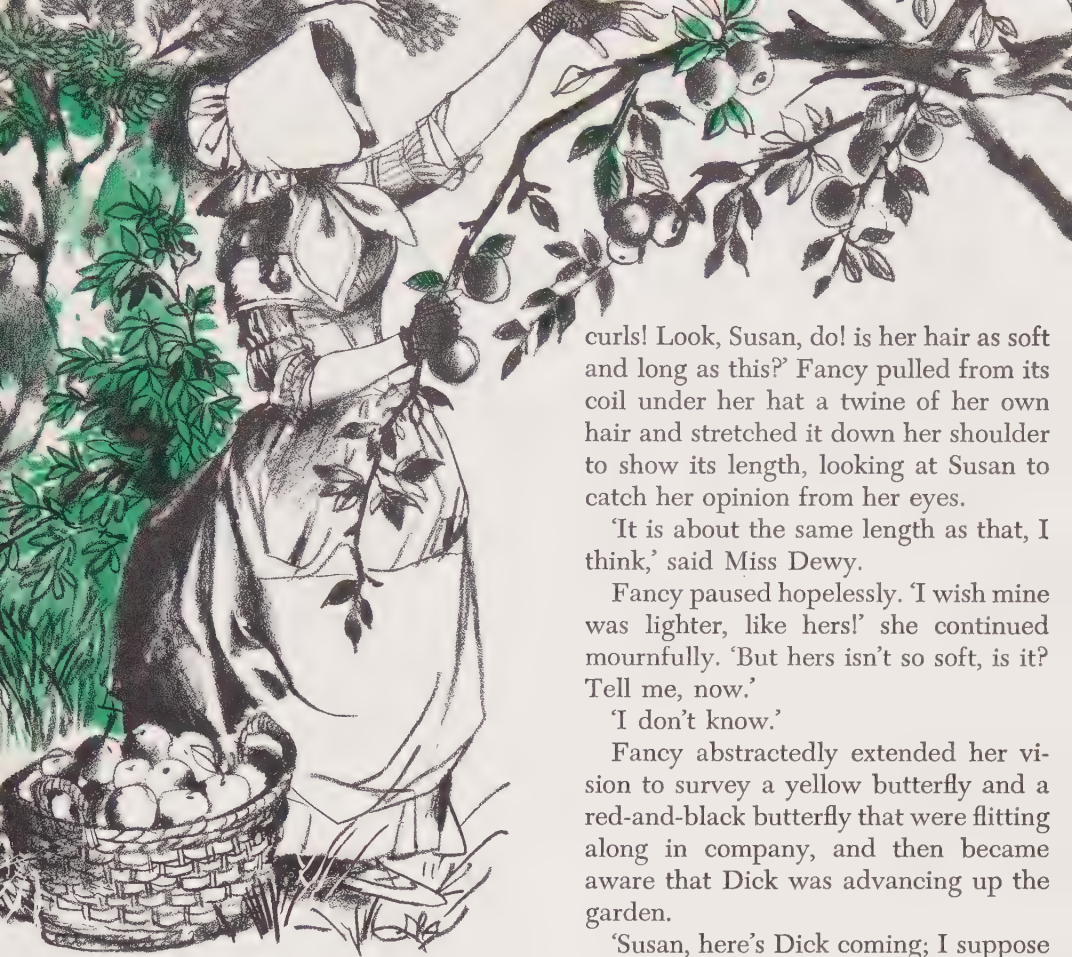
'Well, she was rather pretty, I must own.'

'Tell straight on about her, can't you! Come, do, Susan. How many times did you say he danced with her?'

'Once.'

'Twice, I think you said?'

'Indeed I'm sure I didn't.'



'Well, and he wanted to again, I expect.'

'No; I don't think he did. She wanted to dance with him again bad enough, I know. Everybody does with Dick, because he's so handsome and such a clever courter.'

'O, I wish! — How did you say she wore her hair?'

'In long curls, — and her hair is light, and it curls without being put in paper: that's how it is she's so attractive.'

'She's trying to get him away! yes, yes, she is! And through keeping this miserable school I mustn't wear my hair in curls! But I will; I don't care if I leave the school and go home, I will wear my

curls! Look, Susan, do! is her hair as soft and long as this?' Fancy pulled from its coil under her hat a twine of her own hair and stretched it down her shoulder to show its length, looking at Susan to catch her opinion from her eyes.

'It is about the same length as that, I think,' said Miss Dewy.

Fancy paused hopelessly. 'I wish mine was lighter, like hers!' she continued mournfully. 'But hers isn't so soft, is it? Tell me, now.'

'I don't know.'

Fancy abstractedly extended her vision to survey a yellow butterfly and a red-and-black butterfly that were flitting along in company, and then became aware that Dick was advancing up the garden.

'Susan, here's Dick coming; I suppose that's because we've been talking about him.'

'Well, then, I shall go indoors now — you won't want me'; and Susan turned practically and walked off.

Enter the single-minded Dick, whose only fault at the gipsying, or picnic, had been that of loving Fancy too exclusively and depriving himself of the innocent pleasure the gathering might have afforded him, by sighing regretfully at her absence, — who had danced with the rival in sheer despair of ever being able to get through that stale, flat, and unprofitable afternoon in any other way; but this she would not believe.

Fancy had settled her plan of emotion. To reproach Dick? O no, no. 'I am



in great trouble,' said she, taking what was intended to be a hopelessly melancholy survey of a few small apples lying under the tree; yet a critical ear might have noticed in her voice a tentative tone as to the effect of the words upon Dick when she uttered them.

'What are you in trouble about? Tell me of it,' said Dick earnestly. 'Darling, I will share it with 'ee and help 'ee.'

'No, no; you can't! Nobody can!'

'Why not? You don't deserve it, whatever it is. Tell me, dear.'

'O, it isn't what you think! It is dreadful: my own sin!'

'Sin, Fancy! as if you could sin! I know it can't be.'

''Tis, 'tis!' said the young lady, in a pretty little frenzy of sorrow. 'I have done wrong, and I don't like to tell it! Nobody will forgive me, nobody! and you above all will not! . . . I have allowed myself to — to — fl —'

'What, — not flirt!' he said, controlling his emotion as it were by a sudden pressure inward from his surface. 'And you said only the day before yesterday that you hadn't flirted in your life!'

'Yes, I did; and that was a wicked story! I have let another love me, and —'

'Good G—! Well, I'll forgive you, — yes, if you couldn't help it, — yes, I will!'

said the now dismal Dick. 'Did you encourage him?'

'O, — I don't know, — yes — no. O, I think so!'

'Who was it?'

A pause.

'Tell me!'

'Mr. Shiner.'

After a silence that was only disturbed by the fall of an apple, a long-checked sigh from Dick, and a sob from Fancy, he said with real austerity —

'Tell it all; — every word!'

'He looked at me, and I looked at him, and he said, "Will you let me show you how to catch bullfinches down here by the stream?" And I — wanted to know very much — I did so long to have a bullfinch! I couldn't help that! — and I said, "Yes!" and then he said, "Come here." And I went with him down to the lovely river, and then he said to me, "Look and see how I do it, and then you'll know: I put this bird-lime round this twig, and then I go here," he said, "and hide away under a bush; and presently clever Mister Bird comes and perches upon the twig, and flaps his wings, and you've got him before you can say Jack" — something; O, O, O, I forget what!'

'Jack Sprat,' mournfully suggested Dick through the cloud of his misery.

'No, not Jack Sprat,' she sobbed.

'Then 'twas Jack Robinson!' he said with the emphasis of a man who had resolved to discover every iota of the truth or die.

'Yes, that was it! And then I put my hand upon the rail of the bridge to get across, and — That's all.'

'Well, that isn't much, either,' said Dick critically and more cheerfully. 'Not that I see what business Shiner has to take upon himself to teach you any-

thing. But it seems — it do seem there must have been more than that to set you up in such a dreadful taking?"

He looked into Fancy's eyes. Misery of miseries! — guilt was written there still.

'Now, Fancy, you've not told me all!' said Dick, rather sternly for a quiet young man.

'O, don't speak so cruelly! I am afraid to tell now! If you hadn't been harsh I was going on to tell all; now I can't!'

'Come, dear Fancy, tell: come. I'll forgive; I must, — by heaven and earth, I must, whether I will or no; I love you so!'

'Well, when I put my hand on the bridge, he touched it —'

'A scamp!' said Dick, grinding an imaginary human frame to powder.

'And then he looked at me, and at last he said, "Are you in love with Dick Dewy?" And I said, "Perhaps I am!" and then he said, "I wish you weren't then, for I want to marry you, with all my soul."'

'There's a villain now! Want to marry you! And Dick quivered with the bitterness of satirical laughter. Then suddenly remembering that he might be reckoning without his host: 'Unless, to be sure, you are willing to have him, — perhaps you are,' he said, with the wretched indifference of a castaway.

'No, indeed I am not!' she said, her sobs just beginning to take a favourable turn towards cure.

'Well, then,' said Dick, coming a little to his senses, 'you've been stretching it very much in giving such a dreadful beginning to such a mere nothing. And I know what you've done it for, — just because of that gipsy-party!' He turned away from her and took five paces decisively, as if he were tired of an un-

grateful country, including herself. 'You did it to make me jealous, and I won't stand it!' He flung the words to her over his shoulder and then stalked on, apparently very anxious to walk to the remotest of the Colonies that very minute.

'O, O, O, Dick — Dick!' she cried, trotting after him like a pet lamb and really seriously alarmed at last, 'you'll kill me! My impulses are bad — miserably wicked, — and I can't help it; forgive me, Dick! And I love you always; and those times when you look silly and don't seem quite good enough for me, — just the same, I do, Dick! And there is something more serious, though not concerning that walk with him.'

'Well, what is it?' said Dick, altering his mind about walking to the Colonies; in fact, passing to the other extreme, and standing so rooted to the road that he was apparently not even going home.

'Why, this,' she said, drying the beginning of a new flood of tears she had been going to shed, 'this is the serious part. Father has told Mr. Shiner that he would like him for a son-in-law if he could get me; — that he has his right hearty consent to come courting me!'





AN ARRANGEMENT

CHAPTER IV

'*THAT is serious,*' said Dick, more intellectually than he had spoken for a long time.

The truth was that Geoffrey knew nothing about his daughter's continued walks and meetings with Dick. When a hint that there were symptoms of an attachment between them had first reached Geoffrey's ears he stated so emphatically that he must think the matter over before any such thing could be allowed that, rather unwisely on Dick's part, whatever it might have been on the lady's, the lovers were careful to be seen together no more in public; and Geoffrey, forgetting the report, did not think over the matter at all. So Mr. Shiner resumed his old position in Geoffrey's brain by mere flux of time. Even Shiner began to believe that Dick existed for Fancy no more, — though that remarkably easy-going man had taken

no active steps on his own account as yet.

'And father has not only told Mr. Shiner that,' continued Fancy, 'but he has written me a letter to say he should wish me to encourage Mr. Shiner if 'twas convenient!'

'I must start off and see your father at once!' said Dick, taking two or three vehement steps to the south, recollecting that Mr. Day lived to the north, and coming back again.

'I think we had better see him together. Not tell him what you come for, or anything of the kind, until he likes you, and so win his brain through his heart, which is always the way to manage people. I mean in this way: I am going home on Saturday week to help them in the honey-taking. You might come there to me, have something to eat and drink, and let him guess what your

coming signifies, without saying it in so many words.'

'We'll do it, dearest. But I shall ask him for you, flat and plain; not wait for his guessing.' And the lover then stepped close to her, and attempted to give her one little kiss on the cheek, his lips alighting, however, on an outlying tract of her back hair by reason of an impulse that had caused her to turn her head with a jerk. 'Yes, and I'll put on my second-best suit and a clean shirt and collar, and black my boots as if 'twas a Sunday. 'Twill have a good appearance, you see, and that's a great deal to start with.'

'You won't wear that old waistcoat, will you, Dick?'

'Bless you, no! Why, I —'

'I didn't mean to be personal, dear Dick,' she said, fearing she had hurt his feelings. 'Tis a very nice waistcoat, but what I meant was, that though it is an excellent waistcoat for a settled-down man, it is not quite one for' (she waited, and a blush expanded over her face, and then she went on again) — 'for going courting in.'

'No, I'll wear my best winter one, with the leather lining, that mother made. It is a beautiful, handsome waistcoat inside, yes, as ever anybody saw. In fact, only the other day, I unbuttoned it to show a chap that very lining, and he said it was the strongest, handsomest lining you could wish to see on the king's waistcoat himself.'

'I don't quite know what to wear,' she said, as if her habitual indifference alone to dress had kept back so important a subject till now.

'Why, that blue frock you wore last week.'

'Doesn't set well round the neck. I couldn't wear that.'

'But I shan't care.'

'No, you won't mind.'

'Well, then it's all right. Because you only care how you look to me, do you, dear? I only dress for you, that's certain.'

'Yes, but you see I couldn't appear in it again very well.'

'Any strange gentleman you mid meet in your journey might notice the set of it, I suppose. Fancy, men in love don't think so much about how they look to other women.' It is difficult to say whether a tone of playful banter or of gentle reproach prevailed in the speech.

'Well then, Dick,' she said, with good-humoured frankness, 'I'll own it. I shouldn't like a stranger to see me dressed badly even though I am in love. 'Tis our nature, I suppose.'

'You perfect woman!'

'Yes; if you lay the stress on "woman",' she murmured, looking at a group of hollyhocks in flower, round which a crowd of butterflies had gathered like female idlers round a bonnet-shop.

'But about the dress. Why not wear the one you wore at our party?'

'That sets well, but a girl of the name of Bet Tallor, who lives near our house,





Discussion

1. Explain briefly the chapter titles.
2. Why did Fancy feel a certain amount of embarrassment at accepting Dick's offer of a ride?
3. What is the significance for the future of the story of Fancy's remark, "I always believe flattery *if possible*"?
4. Recall briefly the importance of what occurred at "The Ship." Does it commit Dick more than it does Fancy?
5. Why does Fancy tell Dick about her excursion with Shiner? How does Dick react?
6. What is the point of the discussion about whether Fancy should wear a bonnet or a hat to church?

has had one made almost like it (only in pattern, though of miserably cheap stuff), and I couldn't wear it on that account. Dear me, I am afraid I can't go now.'

'O yes, you must; I know you will!' said Dick, with dismay. 'Why not wear what you've got on?'

'What! this old one! After all, I think that by wearing my grey one Saturday, I can make the blue one do for Sunday. Yes, I will. A hat or a bonnet, which shall it be? Which do I look best in?'

'Well, I think the bonnet is nicest, more quiet and matronly.'

'What's the objection to the hat? Does it make me look old?'

'O no; the hat is well enough; but it makes you look rather too — you won't mind me saying it, dear?'

'Not at all, for I shall wear the bonnet.'

'— Rather too coquettish and flirty for an engaged young woman.'

She reflected a minute. 'Yes; yes. Still, after all, the hat would do best; hats *are* best, you see. Yes, I must wear the hat, dear Dicky, because I ought to wear a hat, you know.'



CHAPTER I

DICK, dressed in his second-best suit, burst into Fancy's sitting-room with a glow of pleasure on his face.

It was two o'clock on Friday, the day before her contemplated visit to her father, and for some reason connected with cleaning the school the children had been given this Friday afternoon for pastime, in addition to the usual Saturday.

'Fancy! it happens just right that it is a leisure half day with you. Smart is lame in his near-foot-fore, and so, as I can't do anything, I've made a holiday afternoon of it, and am come for you to go nutting with me!'

She was sitting by the parlour window with a blue frock lying across her lap and scissors in her hand.

'Go nutting! Yes. But I'm afraid I can't go for an hour or so.'

'Why not? 'Tis the only spare afternoon we may both have together for weeks.'

'This dress of mine, that I am going to wear on Sunday at Yalbury; — I find it fits so badly that I must alter it a little, after all. I told the dressmaker to make it by a pattern I gave her at the time; instead of that, she did it her own way, and made me look a perfect fright.'

'How long will you be?' he inquired, looking rather disappointed.

'Not long. Do wait and talk to me; come, do, dear.'

Dick sat down. The talking progressed very favourably amid the snipping and sewing till about half-past two, at which time his conversation began to be varied by a slight tapping upon his toe with a walking-stick he had cut from the hedge as he came along. Fancy



talked and answered him, but sometimes the answers were so negligently given that it was evident her thoughts lay for the greater part in her lap with the blue dress.

The clock struck three. Dick arose from his seat, walked round the room with his hands behind him, examined all the furniture, then sounded a few notes on the harmonium, then looked inside all the books he could find, then smoothed Fancy's head with his hand. Still the snipping and sewing went on.

The clock struck four. Dick fidgeted about, yawned privately; counted the knots in the table, yawned publicly; counted the flies on the ceiling, yawned horribly; went into the kitchen and scullery and so thoroughly studied the

principle upon which the pump was constructed that he could have delivered a lecture on the subject. Stepping back to Fancy, and finding still that she had not done, he went into her garden and looked at her cabbages and potatoes, and reminded himself that they seemed to him to wear a decidedly feminine aspect; then pulled up several weeds and came in again. The clock struck five, and still the snipping and sewing went on.

Dick attempted to kill a fly, peeled all the rind off his walking-stick, then threw the stick into the scullery because it was spoilt, produced hideous discords from the harmonium, and accidentally overturned a vase of flowers, the water from which ran in a rill across the table and dribbled to the floor, where it formed a lake, the shape of which, after the lapse of a few minutes, he began to modify considerably with his foot till it was like a map of England and Wales.

'Well, Dick, you needn't have made quite such a mess.'

'Well, I needn't, I suppose.' He walked up to the blue dress, and looked at it with a rigid gaze. Then an idea seemed to cross his brain.

'Fancy.'

'Yes.'

'I thought you said you were going to wear your grey gown all day tomorrow on your trip to Yalbury, and in the evening too, when I shall be with you, and ask your father for you?'

'So I am.'

'And the blue one only on Sunday?'

'And the blue one Sunday.'

'Well, dear, I shan't be at Yalbury Sunday to see it.'

'No, but I shall walk to Longpuddle church in the afternoon with father, and such lots of people will be looking at

me there, you know; and it did set so badly round the neck.'

'I never noticed it, and 'tis like nobody else would.'

'They might.'

'Then why not wear the grey one on Sunday as well? 'Tis as pretty as the blue one.'

'I might make the grey one do, certainly. But it isn't so good; it didn't cost half so much as this one, and besides, it would be the same I wore Saturday.'

'Then wear the striped one, dear.'

'I might.'

'Or the dark one.'

'Yes, I might; but I want to wear a fresh one they haven't seen.'

'I see, I see,' said Dick, in a voice in which the tones of love were decidedly inconvenienced by a considerable emphasis, his thoughts meanwhile running as follows: 'I, the man she loves best in the world, as she says, am to understand that my poor half-holiday is to be lost, because she wants to wear on Sunday a gown there is not the slightest necessity for wearing, simply, in fact, to appear more striking than usual in the eyes of the Longpuddle young men; and I not there, either.'

'Then there are three dresses good enough for my eyes, but neither is good enough for the youths of Longpuddle,' he said.

'No, not that exactly, Dick. Still, you see, I do want — to look pretty to them — there, that's honest! But I shan't be much longer.'

'How much?'

'A quarter of an hour.'

'Very well; I'll come in a quarter of an hour.'

'Why go away?'

'I mid as well.'

He went out, walked down the road,

and sat upon a gate. Here he meditated and meditated, and the more he meditated the more decidedly did he begin to fume, and the more positive was he that his time had been scandalously trifled with by Miss Fancy Day — that, so far from being the simple girl who had never had a sweetheart before, as she had solemnly assured him time after time, she was, if not a flirt, a woman who had had no end of admirers; a girl most certainly too anxious about her frocks; a girl, whose feelings, though warm, were not deep; a girl who cared a great deal too much how she appeared in the eyes of other men. 'What she loves best in the world,' he thought, with an incipient spice of his father's



grinness, 'is her hair and complexion. What she loves next best, her gowns and hats; what she loves next best, myself, perhaps!'

Suffering great anguish at this disloyalty in himself and harshness to his darling, yet disposed to persevere in it, a horribly cruel thought crossed his mind. He would not call for her, as he had promised, at the end of a quarter of an hour! Yes, it would be a punishment she well deserved. Although the best part of the afternoon had been wasted he would go nutting as he had intended, and go by himself.

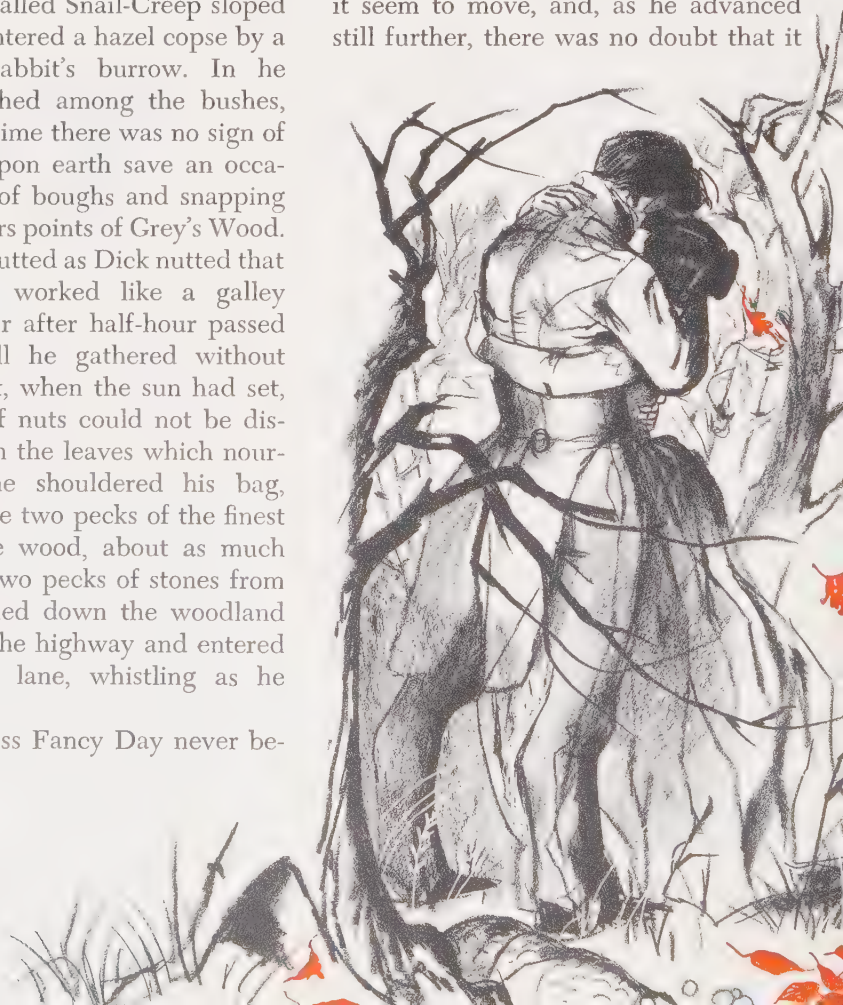
He leaped over the gate, and pushed up the lane for nearly two miles, till a winding path called Snail-Creep sloped up a hill and entered a hazel copse by a hole like a rabbit's burrow. In he plunged, vanished among the bushes, and in a short time there was no sign of his existence upon earth save an occasional rustling of boughs and snapping of twigs in divers points of Grey's Wood.

Never man nutted as Dick nutted that afternoon. He worked like a galley slave. Half-hour after half-hour passed away, and still he gathered without ceasing. At last, when the sun had set, and bunches of nuts could not be distinguished from the leaves which nourished them, he shouldered his bag, containing quite two pecks of the finest produce of the wood, about as much use to him as two pecks of stones from the road, strolled down the woodland track, crossed the highway and entered the homeward lane, whistling as he went.

Probably, Miss Fancy Day never be-

fore or after stood so low in Mr. Dewy's opinion as on that afternoon. In fact, it is just possible that a few more blue dresses on the Longpuddle young men's account would have clarified Dick's brain entirely, and made him once more a free man.

But Venus had planned other developments, at any rate for the present. Cuckoo-Lane, the way he pursued, passed over a ridge which rose keenly against the sky about fifty yards in his van. Here, upon the bright after-glow about the horizon, was now visible an irregular shape, which at first he conceived to be a bough standing a little beyond the line of its neighbours. Then it seem to move, and, as he advanced still further, there was no doubt that it



was a living being sitting in the bank, head bowed on hand. The grassy margin entirely prevented his footsteps from being heard, and it was not till he was close that the figure recognized him. Up it sprang, and he was face to face with Fancy.

'Dick, Dick! O, is it you, Dick!'

'Yes, Fancy,' said Dick, in a rather repentant tone, and lowering his nuts.

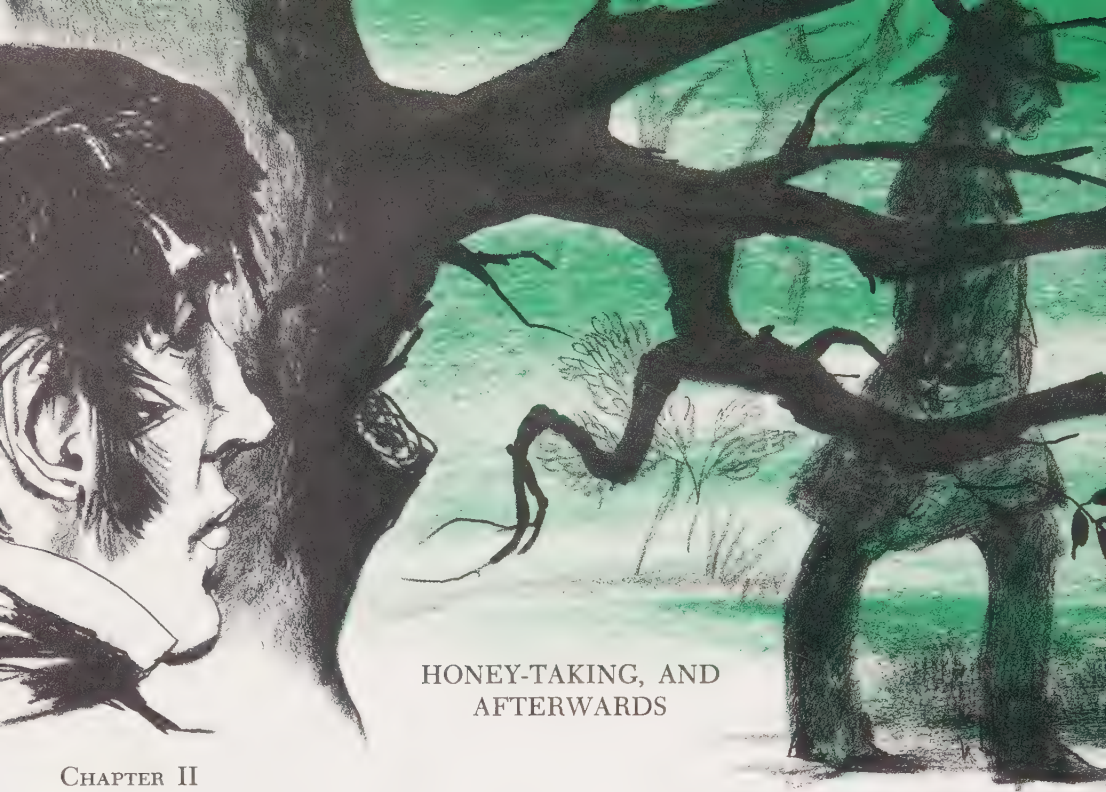
She ran up to him, flung her parasol on the grass, put her little head against his breast, and then there began a narrative disjointed by such a hysterical weeping as was never surpassed for intensity in the whole history of love.

'O Dick,' she sobbed out, 'where have you been away from me? O, I have suffered agony, and thought you would never come any more! 'Tis cruel, Dick; no 'tisin't, it is justice! I've been walking miles and miles up and down Grey's Wood, trying to find you, till I was wearied and worn out, and I could walk no further, and had come back this far! O Dick, directly you were gone I thought I had offended you and I put down the dress; 'tisin't finished now, and I never will finish it, and I'll wear an old one Sunday! Yes, Dick, I will, because I don't care what I wear when you are not by my side — ha, you think I do, but I don't! — and I ran after you, and I saw you go up Snail-Creep and not look back once, and then you plunged in, and I after you; but I was too far behind. O, I did wish the horrid bushes had been cut down so that I

could see your dear shape again! And then I called out to you and nobody answered, and I was afraid to call very loud lest anybody else should hear me. Then I kept wandering and wandering about, and it was dreadful misery, Dick. And then I shut my eyes and fell to picturing you looking at some other woman, very pretty and nice, but with no affection or truth in her at all, and then imagined you saying to yourself, "Ah, she's as good as Fancy, for Fancy told me a story, and was a flirt, and cared for herself more than me, so now I'll have this one for my sweetheart." O, you won't, will you, Dick, for I love you so!

It is scarcely necessary to add that Dick renounced his freedom there and then, and kissed her ten times over, and promised that no pretty woman of the kind alluded to should ever engross his thoughts; in short, that though he had been vexed with her all such vexation was past, and that henceforth and for ever it was simply Fancy or death for him. And then they set about proceeding homewards, very slowly on account of Fancy's weariness, she leaning upon his shoulder and in addition receiving support from his arm round her waist; though she had sufficiently recovered from her desperate condition to sing to him, 'Why are you wandering here, I pray?' during the latter part of their walk. Nor is it necessary to describe in detail how the bag of nuts was quite forgotten until three days later, when it was found among the brambles and restored empty to Mrs. Dewy, her initials being marked thereon in red cotton; and how she puzzled herself till her head ached upon the question of how on earth her meal-bag could have got into Cuckoo-Lane.





HONEY-TAKING, AND AFTERWARDS

CHAPTER II

SATURDAY evening saw Dick Dewy journeying on foot to Yalbury Wood, according to the arrangement with Fancy.

The landscape being concave, at the going down of the sun everything suddenly assumed a uniform robe of shade. The evening advanced from sunset to dusk long before Dick's arrival, and his progress during the latter portion of his walk through the trees was indicated by the flutter of terrified birds that had been roosting over the path. And in crossing the glades, masses of hot dry air that had been formed on the hills during the day greeted his cheeks alternately with clouds of damp night air from the valleys. He reached the keeper-steward's house, where the grass-plot and the garden in front appeared light and pale against the unbroken darkness of the grove from which he had emerged, and paused at the garden gate.

He had scarcely been there a minute when he beheld a sort of procession advancing from the door in his front. It consisted first of Enoch the trapper, carrying a spade on his shoulder and a lantern dangling in his hand; then came Mrs. Day, the light of the lantern revealing that she bore in her arms curious objects about a foot long in the form of Latin crosses (made of lath and brown paper dipped in brimstone — called matches by bee-masters); next came Miss Day with a shawl thrown over her head; and behind all, in the gloom, Mr. Frederic Shiner.

Dick in his consternation at finding Shiner present was at a loss how to proceed, and retired under a tree to collect his thoughts.

'Here I be, Enoch,' said a voice; and the procession advancing further, the lantern's rays illuminated the figure of



Geoffrey awaiting their arrival beside a row of beehives in front of the path. Taking the spade from Enoch he proceeded to dig two holes in the earth beside the hives, the others standing round in a circle except Mrs. Day, who deposited her matches in the fork of an apple-tree and returned to the house. The party remaining were now lit up in front by the lantern in their midst, their shadows radiating each way upon the garden-plot like the spokes of a wheel. An apparent embarrassment of Fancy at the presence of Shiner caused a silence in the assembly, during which the preliminaries of execution were arranged, the matches fixed, the stake kindled, the two hives placed over the two holes, and the earth stopped round the edges. Geoffrey then stood erect, and rather

more, to straighten his backbone after the digging.

'They were a peculiar family,' said Mr. Shiner, regarding the hives reflectively.

Geoffrey nodded.

'Those holes will be the grave of thousands!' said Fancy. 'I think 'tis rather a cruel thing to do.'

Her father shook his head. 'No,' he said, tapping the hives to shake the dead bees from their cells, 'if you suffocate 'em this way, they only die once: if you fumigate 'em in the new way, they come to life again, and die o' starvation; so the pangs o' death be twice upon 'em.'

'I incline to Fancy's notion,' said Mr. Shiner, laughing lightly.

'The proper way to take honey, so that the bees be neither starved nor



murdered, is a puzzling matter,' said the keeper steadily.

'I should like never to take it from them,' said Fancy.

'But 'tis the money,' said Enoch mus- ingly. 'For without money man is a shadder!'

The lantern-light had disturbed many bees that had escaped from hives de- stroyed some days earlier, and, demor- alized by affliction, were now getting a living as marauders about the doors of other hives. Several flew round the head and neck of Geoffrey; then darted upon him with an irritated bizz.

Enoch threw down the lantern and ran off and pushed his head into a cur- rant bush; Fancy scudded up the path; and Mr. Shiner floundered away helter- skelter among the cabbages. Geoffrey stood his ground, unmoved and firm as a rock. Fancy was the first to return, followed by Enoch picking up the lan- tern. Mr. Shiner still remained invisible.

'Have the craters stung ye?' said Enoch to Geoffrey.

'No, not much — on'y a little here and there,' he said with leisurely solemnity, shaking one bee out of his shirt sleeve, pulling another from among his hair,



and two or three more from his neck. The rest looked on during this proceed- ing with a complacent sense of being out of it, — much as a European nation in a state of internal commotion is watched by its neighbours.

'Are those all of them, father?' said



Fancy, when Geoffrey had pulled away five.

'Almost all, — though I feel one or two more sticking into my shoulder and side. Ah! there's another just begun again upon my backbone. You lively young mortals, how did you get inside there? However, they can't sting me many times more, poor things, for they

must be getting weak. They mid as well stay in me till bedtime now, I suppose.'

As he himself was the only person affected by this arrangement it seemed satisfactory enough; and after a noise of feet kicking against cabbages in a blundering progress among them the voice of Mr. Shiner was heard from the darkness in that direction.

'Is all quite safe again?'

No answer being returned to this query he apparently assumed that he might venture forth, and gradually drew near the lantern again. The hives were now removed from their position over the holes, one being handed to Enoch to carry indoors, and one being taken by Geoffrey himself.

'Bring hither the lantern, Fancy: the spade can bide.'

Geoffrey and Enoch then went towards the house, leaving Shiner and Fancy standing side by side on the garden-plot.

'Allow me,' said Shiner, stooping for the lantern and seizing it at the same time with Fancy.

'I can carry it,' said Fancy, religiously repressing all inclination to trifle. She had thoroughly considered that subject after the tearful explanation of the bird-catching adventure to Dick, and had decided that it would be dishonest in her as an engaged young woman to trifle with men's eyes and hands any more. Finding that Shiner still retained his hold of the lantern she relinquished it, and he, having found her retaining it, also let go. The lantern fell and was extinguished. Fancy moved on.

'Where is the path?' said Mr. Shiner.

'Here,' said Fancy. 'Your eyes will get used to the dark in a minute or two.'

'Till that time will ye lend me your hand?'

Fancy gave him the extreme tips of her fingers and they stepped from the plot into the path.

'You don't accept attentions very freely.'

'It depends upon who offers them.'

'A fellow like me, for instance.'

A dead silence.

'Well, what do you say, Missie?'

'It then depends upon how they are offered.'

'Not wildly, and yet not careless-like; not purposely, and yet not by chance; not too quick nor yet too slow.'

'How then?' said Fancy.

'Coolly and practically,' he said. 'How would that kind of love be taken?'

'Not anxiously, and yet not indifferently; neither blushing nor pale; nor religiously nor yet quite wickedly.'

'Well, how?'

'Not at all.'



Geoffrey Day's storehouse at the back of his dwelling was hung with bunches of dried horehound, mint, and sage; brown-paper bags of thyme and lavender; and long ropes of clean onions. On shelves were spread large red and yellow apples, and choice selections of early potatoes for seed next year; — vulgar crowds of commoner kind lying beneath in heaps. A few empty beehives were clustered around a nail in one corner, under which stood two or three barrels of new cider of the first crop, each bubbling and squirting forth from the yet open bung-hole.

Fancy was now kneeling beside the two inverted hives, one of which rested against her lap for convenience in operating upon the contents. She thrust her sleeves above her elbows, and inserted her small pink hand edgewise between each white lobe of honeycomb, performing the act so adroitly and gently as not to unseal a single cell. Then cracking the piece off at the crown of the hive by a slight backward and forward movement she lifted each portion as it was loosened into a large blue platter placed on a bench at her side.

'Bother these little mortals!' said Geoffrey, who was holding the light to her and giving his back an uneasy twist. 'I really think I may as well go indoors and take 'em out, poor things! for they won't let me alone. There's two a-stinging wi' all their might now. I'm sure I wonder their strength can last so long.'

'All right, friend; I'll hold the candle whilst you are gone,' said Mr. Shiner, leisurely taking the light and allowing Geoffrey to depart, which he did with his usual long paces.

He could hardly have gone round to the house-door when other footsteps were heard approaching the outbuild-



ing; the tip of a finger appeared in the hole through which the wood latch was lifted, and Dick Dewy came in, having been all this time walking up and down the wood vainly waiting for Shiner's departure.

Fancy looked up and welcomed him rather confusedly. Shiner grasped the candlestick more firmly, and, lest doing this in silence should not imply to Dick with sufficient force that he was quite at home and cool, he sang invincibly —

'“King Arthur he had three sons.”'

'Father here?' said Dick.

'Indoors, I think,' said Fancy, looking pleasantly at him.





Dick surveyed the scene and did not seem inclined to hurry off just at that moment. Shiner went on singing —

“‘The miller was drown’d in his pond,
The weaver was hung in his yarn,
And the d— ran away with the little tail-or,
With the broadcloth under his arm.’”

‘That’s a terrible crippled rhyme, if that’s your rhyme!’ said Dick, with a grain of superciliousness in his tone.

‘It’s no use your complaining to me about the rhyme!’ said Mr. Shiner. ‘You must go to the man that made it.’



Fancy by this time had acquired confidence.

‘Taste a bit, Mr. Dewy,’ she said, holding up to him a small circular piece of honeycomb that had been the last in the row of layers, remaining still on her knees and flinging back her head to look in his face; ‘and then I’ll taste a bit too.’

‘And I, if you please,’ said Mr. Shiner. Nevertheless the farmer looked superior, as if he could even now hardly join the trifling from very importance of station; and after receiving the honeycomb from Fancy he turned it over in his hand till the cells began to be crushed, and the liquid honey ran down from his fingers in a thin string.

Suddenly a faint cry from Fancy caused them to gaze at her.

‘What’s the matter, dear?’ said Dick.

‘It is nothing, but — O-o! — a bee has stung the inside of my lip! He was in one of the cells I was eating!’

‘We must keep down the swelling or it may be serious!’ said Shiner, stepping up and kneeling beside her. ‘Let me see it.’

‘No, no!’

‘Just let *me* see it,’ said Dick kneeling on the other side; and after some hesitation she pressed down her lip with one finger to show the place. ‘O, I hope ’twill soon be better! I don’t mind a sting in ordinary places, but it is so bad upon your lip,’ she added with tears in her eyes, and writhing a little from the pain.

Shiner held the light above his head and pushed his face close to Fancy’s, as if the lip had been shown exclusively to himself, upon which Dick pushed closer, as if Shiner were not there at all.

‘It is swelling,’ said Dick to her right aspect.

‘It isn’t swelling,’ said Shiner to her left aspect.



'Is it dangerous on the lip?' cried Fancy. 'I know it is dangerous on the tongue.'

'O no, not dangerous,' answered Dick.

'Rather dangerous,' had answered Shiner simultaneously.

'I must try to bear it!' said Fancy, turning again to the hives.

'Hartshorn-and-oil is a good thing to put to it, Miss Day,' said Shiner with great concern.

'Sweet-oil-and-hartshorn I've found to be a good thing to cure stings, Miss Day,' said Dick with greater concern.

'We have some mixed indoors; would you kindly run and get it for me?' she said.

Now whether by inadvertence or whether by mischievous intention, the individuality of the *you* was so carelessly denoted that both Dick and Shiner sprang to their feet like twin acrobats, and marched abreast to the door; both seized the latch and lifted it,

and continued marching on shoulder to shoulder in the same manner to the dwelling-house. Not only so but, entering the room, they marched as before straight up to Mrs. Day's chair, letting the door in the oak partition slam so forcibly that the rows of pewter on the dresser rang like a bell.

'Mrs. Day, Fancy has stung her lip and wants you to give me the hartshorn, please,' said Mr. Shiner, very close to Mrs. Day's face.

'O, Mrs. Day, Fancy has asked me to bring out the hartshorn, please, because she has stung her lip!' said Dick, a little closer to Mrs. Day's face.

'Well, men alive! that's no reason why you should eat me, I suppose!' said Mrs. Day, drawing back.

She searched in the corner-cupboard, produced the bottle, and began to dust the cork, the rim, and every other part very carefully, Dick's hand and Shiner's hand waiting side by side.

'Which is head man?' said Mrs. Day. 'Now, don't come mumbudgeting so close again. Which is head man?'

Neither spoke; and the bottle was inclined towards Shiner. Shiner, as a high-class man, would not look in the least triumphant, and turned to go off with it as Geoffrey came downstairs after the search in his linen for concealed bees.

'O — that you, Master Dewy?'

Dick assured the keeper that it was; and the young man then determined upon a bold stroke for the attainment of his end, forgetting that the worst of bold strokes is the disastrous consequences they involve if they fail.

'I've come on purpose to speak to you very particular, Mr. Day,' he said, with a crushing emphasis intended for the ears of Mr. Shiner, who was vanishing round the door-post at that moment.

'Well, I've been forced to go upstairs and unrind myself, and shake some bees out o' me,' said Geoffrey, walking slowly towards the open door and standing on the threshold. 'The young rascals got into my shirt and wouldn't be quiet now.'

Dick followed him to the door.

'I've come to speak a word to you,' he repeated, looking out at the pale mist creeping up from the gloom of the valley. 'You may perhaps guess what it is about.'

The keeper lowered his hands into the depths of his pockets, twirled his eyes, balanced himself on his toes, looked as perpendicularly downward as if his glance were a plumb-line, then horizontally, collecting together the cracks that lay about his face till they were all in the neighbourhood of his eyes.

'Maybe I don't know,' he replied.

Dick said nothing; and the stillness

was disturbed only by some small bird that was being killed by an owl in the adjoining wood, whose cry passed into the silence without mingling with it.

'I've left my hat up in chammer,' said Geoffrey; 'wait while I step up and get en.'

'I'll be in the garden,' said Dick.

He went round by a side wicket into the garden, and Geoffrey went upstairs. It was the custom in Mellstock and its vicinity to discuss matters of pleasure and ordinary business inside the house, and to reserve the garden for very important affairs: a custom which, as is supposed, originated in the desirability of getting away at such times from the other members of the family when there was only one room for living in, though it was now quite as frequently practised by those who suffered from no such limitation to the size of their domiciles.

The head-keeper's form appeared in the dusky garden, and Dick walked towards him. The elder paused and leant over the rail of a piggery that stood on the left of the path, upon which Dick did the same; and they both contemplated a whitish shadowy shape that was moving about and grunting among the straw of the interior.

'I've come to ask for Fancy,' said Dick.

'I'd as lief you hadn't.'

'Why should that be, Mr. Day?'

'Because it makes me say that you've come to ask what ye be'n't likely to have. Have ye come for anything else?'

'Nothing.'

'Then I'll just tell 'ee you've come on a very foolish errand. D'ye know what her mother was?'

'No.'

'A teacher in a landed family's nursery,

who was foolish enough to marry the keeper of the same establishment; for I was only a keeper then, though now I've a dozen other irons in the fire as steward here for my lord, what with the timber sales and the yearly fellings, and the gravel and sand sales, and one thing and t'other. However, d'ye think Fancy picked up her good manners, the smooth turn of her tongue, her musical notes, and her knowledge of books, in a homely hole like this?

'No.'

'D'ye know where?'

'No.'

'Well, when I went a-wandering after her mother's death she lived with her aunt, who kept a boarding-school, till her aunt married Lawyer Green — a man as sharp as a needle — and the school was broke up. Did ye know that then she went to the training-school, and that her name stood first among the Queen's scholars of her year?'

'I've heard so.'

'And that when she sat for her certificate as Government teacher, she had the highest of the first class?'

'Yes.'

'Well, and do ye know what I live in such a miserly way for when I've got enough to do without it, and why I make her work as a schoolmistress instead of living here?'

'No.'

'That if any gentleman, who sees her to be his equal in polish, should want to marry her, and she want to marry him, he shan't be superior to her in pocket. Now do ye think after this that you be good enough for her?'

'No.'

'Then good-night t'ee, Master Dewy.'

'Good-night, Mr. Day.'

Modest Dick's reply had faltered upon his tongue, and he turned away wondering at his presumption in asking for a woman whom he had seen from the beginning to be superior to him.



FANCY IN THE RAIN

CHAPTER III

THE next scene is a tempestuous afternoon in the following month, and Fancy Day is discovered walking from her father's home towards Mellstock.

A single vast grey cloud covered the country, from which the small rain and mist had just begun to blow down in wavy sheets, alternately thick and thin. The trees of the fields and plantations writhed like miserable men as the air wound its way swiftly among them: the lowest portions of their trunks, that had hardly ever been known to move, were visibly rocked by the fiercer gusts, distressing the mind by its painful unwontedness, as when a strong man is seen to shed tears. Low-hanging boughs went up and down; high and erect boughs went to and fro; the blasts being so irregular, and divided into so many cross-currents, that neighbouring branches of the same tree swept the skies in independent motions, crossed each other, or became entangled. Across the open spaces flew flocks of green and yellowish leaves which, after travelling a long distance from their parent trees, reached the ground and lay there with their under-sides upward.

As the rain and wind increased, and Fancy's bonnet-ribbons leapt more and more snappishly against her chin, she paused on entering Mellstock-Lane to consider her latitude, and the distance to a place of shelter. The nearest house was Elizabeth Endorfield's in Higher Mellstock, whose cottage and garden stood not far from the junction of that

hamlet with the road she followed. Fancy hastened onward, and in five minutes entered a gate which shed upon her toes a flood of waterdrops as she opened it.

'Come in, chiel!' a voice exclaimed before Fancy had knocked: a promptness that would have surprised her had she not known that Mrs. Endorfield was an exceedingly and exceptionally sharp woman in the use of her eyes and ears.

Fancy went in and sat down. Elizabeth was paring potatoes for her husband's supper.



Scrape, scrape, scrape; then a toss, and splash went a potato into a bucket of water.

Now as Fancy listlessly noted these proceedings of the dame she began to reconsider an old subject that lay uppermost in her heart. Since the interview between her father and Dick the days had been melancholy days for her. Geoffrey's firm opposition to the notion of Dick as a son-in-law was more than she had expected. She had frequently seen her lover since that time, it is true, and had loved him more for the opposition than she would have otherwise dreamt of doing — which was a happiness of a certain kind. Yet, though love is thus an end in itself it must be believed to be the means to another end if it is to assume the rosy hues of an unalloyed pleasure. And such a belief Fancy and Dick were emphatically denied just now.

Elizabeth Endorfield had a repute among women which was in its nature something between distinction and notoriety. It was founded on the following items of character. She was shrewd and penetrating; her house stood in a lonely place; she never went to church; she wore a red cloak; she always retained her bonnet indoors; and she had a pointed chin. Thus far her attributes were distinctly Satanic; and those who looked no further called her, in plain terms, a witch. But she was not gaunt, nor ugly in the upper part of her face, nor particularly strange in manner; so that, when her more intimate acquaintances spoke of her the term was softened, and she became simply a Deep Body, who was as long-headed as she was high. It may be stated that Elizabeth belonged to a class of suspects who were gradually losing their mysterious

characteristics under the administration of the young vicar; though during the long reign of Mr. Grinham the parish of Mellstock had proved extremely favourable to the growth of witches.

While Fancy was revolving all this in her mind, and putting it to herself whether it was worth while to tell her troubles to Elizabeth, and ask her advice in getting out of them, the witch spoke.

'You be down — proper down,' she said suddenly, dropping another potato into the bucket.

Fancy took no notice.

'About your young man.'

Fancy reddened. Elizabeth seemed to be watching her thoughts. Really one would almost think she must have the powers people ascribed to her.

'Father not in the humour for't, hey?' Another potato was finished and flung in. 'Ah, I know about it. Little birds tell me things that people don't dream of my knowing.'

Fancy was desperate about Dick, and here was a chance — O, such a wicked chance! — of getting help; and what was goodness beside love!

'I wish you'd tell me how to put him in the humour for it?' she said.

'That I could soon do,' said the witch quietly.

'Really? O, do; anyhow — I don't care — so that it is done! How could I do it, Mrs. Endorfield?'

'Nothing so mighty wonderful in it.'

'Well, but how?'

'By witchery, of course!' said Elizabeth.

'No!' said Fancy.

''Tis, I assure ye. Didn't you ever hear I was a witch?'

'Well,' hesitated Fancy, 'I have heard you called so.'

'And you believed it?'

'I can't say that I did exactly believe it, for 'tis very horrible and wicked; but, O, how I do wish it was possible for you to be one!'

'So I am. And I'll tell you how to bewitch your father to let you marry Dick Dewy.'

'Will it hurt him, poor thing?'

'Hurt who?'

'Father.'

'No; the charm is worked by common sense, and the spell can only be broke by your acting stupidly.'

Fancy looked rather perplexed, and Elizabeth went on:

'This fear of Lizz — whatever 'tis —

By great and small,

She makes pretence to common sense,
And that's all.

You must do it like this.' The witch laid down her knife and potato, and then poured into Fancy's ear a long and detailed list of directions, glancing up from the corner of her eye into Fancy's face with an expression of sinister humour. Fancy's face brightened, clouded, rose and sank, as the narrative pro-



ceeded. 'There,' said Elizabeth at length, stooping for the knife and another potato, 'do that, and you'll have him by-long and by-late, my dear.'

'And do it I will!' said Fancy.

She then turned her attention to the external world once more. The rain continued as usual, but the wind had abated considerably during the discourse. Judging that it was now possible to keep an umbrella erect she pulled her hood again over her bonnet, bade the witch good-bye, and went her way.

Discussion

1. Explain briefly the chapter titles.
2. Explain Hardy's comment that "a few more blue dresses on the Longpuddle young men's account would have clarified Dick's brain entirely, and made him once more a free man."
3. How do we know Fancy realized she had made a tactical error? How does she rectify her error?
4. How does Geoffrey Day live up to his reputation of being a shrewd man?
5. What is Mrs. Endorfield's reputation? Has she done anything to deserve this reputation?
6. If you have not read beyond Chapter III, what is your guess as to Mrs. Endorfield's advice to Fancy?



THE SPELL

CHAPTER IV

MRS. ENDORFIELD'S advice was duly followed.

'I be proper sorry that your daughter isn't so well as she might be,' said a Mellstock man to Geoffrey one morning.

'But is there anything in it?' said Geoffrey uneasily, as he shifted his hat to the right. 'I can't understand the report. She didn't complain to me a bit when I saw her.'

'No appetite at all, they say.'

Geoffrey crossed to Mellstock and called at the school that afternoon. Fancy welcomed him as usual, and asked him to stay and take tea with her.

'I be'n't much for tea this time o' day,' he said, but stayed.

During the meal he watched her narrowly. And to his great consternation discovered the following unprecedented change in the healthy girl — that she cut herself only a diaphanous slice of bread-and-butter, and, laying it on her

plate, passed the meal-time in breaking it into pieces, but eating no more than about one-tenth of the slice. Geoffrey hoped she would say something about Dick and finish up by weeping, as she had done after the decision against him a few days subsequent to the interview in the garden. But nothing was said, and in due time Geoffrey departed again for Yalbury Wood.

'Tis to be hoped poor Miss Fancy will be able to keep on her school,' said Geoffrey's man Enoch to Geoffrey the following week, as they were shovelling up ant-hills in the wood.

Geoffrey stuck in the shovel, swept seven or eight ants from his sleeve, and killed another that was prowling round his ear, then looked perpendicularly into the earth, as usual, waiting for Enoch to say more. 'Well, why shouldn't she?' said the keeper at last.

'The baker told me yesterday,' continued Enoch, shaking out another em-

met that had run merrily up his thigh, 'that the bread he've left at that there school-house this last month would starve any mouse in the three creations; that 'twould so! And afterwards I had a pint o' small down at Morris's, and there I heard more.'

'What might that ha' been?'

'That she used to have a pound o' the best rolled butter a week, regular as clockwork, from Dairyman Viney's for herself, as well as just so much salted for the helping girl, and the 'ooman she calls in; but now the same quantity d'last her three weeks, and then 'tis thoughted she throws it away sour.'

'Finish doing the emmets, and carry the bag home-along.' The keeper resumed his gun, tucked it under his arm, and went on without whistling to the dogs, who however followed with a bearing meant to imply that they did not expect any such attentions when their master was reflecting.

On Saturday morning a note came from Fancy. He was not to trouble about sending her the couple of rabbits as was intended, because she feared she should not want them. Later in the day Geoffrey went to Casterbridge and called upon the butcher who served Fancy with fresh meat, which was put down to her father's account.

'I've called to pay up our little bill, Neighbour Haylock, and you can gie me the chiel's account at the same time.'

Mr. Haylock turned round three-quarters of a circle in the midst of a heap of joints, altered the expression of his face from meat to money, went into a little office consisting only of a door and a window, looked very vigorously into a book which possessed length but no breadth; and then, seizing a piece



of paper and scribbling thereupon, handed the bill.

Probably it was the first time in the history of commercial transactions that the quality of shortness in a butcher's bill was a cause of tribulation to the debtor. 'Why, this isn't all she've had in a whole month!' said Geoffrey.

'Every mossel,' said the butcher — '(now, Dan, take that leg and shoulder to Mrs. White's, and this eleven pound here to Mr. Martin's) — you've been treating her to smaller joints lately, to my thinking, Mr. Day?'

'Only two or three little scam rabbits this last week, as I am alive — I wish I had!'

'Well, my wife said to me — (Dan! not too much, not too much on that tray at a time; better go twice) — my wife said to me as she posted up the books: "Haylock," she says, "Miss Day must have been affronted this summer during that hot muggy weather that spoilt so much for us; for depend upon't," she says, "she've been trying John Grimmett unknown to us: see her account else." 'Tis little, of course, at the best of times, being only for one, but now 'tis next kin to nothing.'

'I'll inquire,' said Geoffrey despondingly.

He returned by way of Mellstock, and called upon Fancy in fulfilment of a promise. It being Saturday the children were enjoying a holiday, and on entering the residence Fancy was nowhere to be seen. Nan the charwoman was sweeping the kitchen.

'Where's my da'ter?' said the keeper.

'Well, you see, she was tired with the week's teaching, and this morning she said, "Nan, I shan't get up till the evening." You see, Mr. Day, if people don't eat they can't work; and as she've

gie'd up eating she must gie up working.'

'Have ye carried up any dinner to her?'

'No; she don't want any. There, we all know that such things don't come without a good reason — not that I wish to say anything about a broken heart, or anything of the kind.'

Geoffrey's own heart felt inconveniently large just then. He went to the staircase and ascended to his daughter's door.

'Fancy!'

'Come in, father.'

To see a person in bed from any cause whatever on a fine afternoon is depressing enough; and here was his only child Fancy not only in bed, but looking very pale. Geoffrey was visibly disturbed.

'Fancy, I didn't expect to see thee here, chiel,' he said. 'What's the matter?'

'I'm not well, father.'

'How's that?'

'Because I think of things.'

'What things can you have to think o' so mortal much?'

'You know, father.'

'You think I've been cruel to thee in saying that that penniless Dick o' thine shan't marry thee, I suppose?'

No answer.

'Well, you know, Fancy, I do it for the best, and he isn't good enough for thee. You know that well enough.' Here he again looked at her as she lay. 'Well, Fancy, I can't let my only chiel die; and if you can't live without en, you must ha' en, I suppose.'

'O, I don't want him like that; all against your will, and everything so disobedient!' sighed the invalid.

'No, no, 'tisn't against my will. My wish is, now I d'see how 'tis hurten



thee to live without en, that he shall marry thee as soon as we've considered a little. That's my wish flat and plain, Fancy. There, never cry, my little maid! You ought to have cried afore; no need o' crying now 'tis all over. Well, howsoever, try to step over and see me and mother-law to-morrow, and ha' a bit of dinner wi' us.'

'And — Dick too?'

'Ay, Dick too, 'far's I know.'

'And *when* do you think you'll have considered, father, and he may marry me?' she coaxed.

'Well, there, say next Midsummer; that's not a day too long to wait.'

On leaving the school Geoffrey went to the tranter's. Old William opened the door.

'Is your grandson Dick in 'ithin, William?'

'No, not just now, Mr. Day. Though he've been at home a good deal lately.'

'O, how's that?'

'What wi' one thing, and what wi' 'other, he's all in a mope, as might be said. Don't seem the feller he used to. Ay, 'a will sit studding and thinking as if 'a were going to turn chapel-member, and then do nothing but traypse and wamble about. Used to be such a chatty boy, too, Dick did; and now 'a don't speak at all. But won't ye step inside? Reuben will be home soon, 'a b'lieve.'

'No, thank you, I can't stay now. Will ye just ask Dick if he'll do me the kindness to step over to Yalbury to-morrow with my da'ter Fancy, if she's well enough? I don't like her to come by herself, now she's not so terrible topping in health.'

'So I've heard. Ay, sure, I'll tell him without fail.'



AFTER GAINING HER POINT

CHAPTER V

THE visit to Geoffrey passed off as delightfully as a visit might have been expected to pass off when it was the first day of smooth experience in a hitherto obstructed love-course. And then came a series of several happy days of the same undisturbed serenity. Dick could court her when he chose; stay away when he chose, — which was never; walk with her by winding streams and waterfalls and autumn scenery till dews and twilight sent them home. And thus they drew near the day of the Harvest Thanksgiving, which was also the time chosen for opening the organ in Mellstock Church.

It chanced that Dick on that very day was called away from Mellstock. A young acquaintance had died of consumption at Charmley, a neighbouring village, on the previous Monday, and Dick in fulfilment of a long-standing

promise was to assist in carrying him to the grave. When on Tuesday Dick went towards the school to acquaint Fancy with the fact it is difficult to say whether his own disappointment at being denied the sight of her triumphant *début* as organist, was greater than his vexation that his pet should on this great occasion be deprived of the pleasure of his presence. However, the intelligence was communicated. She bore it as she best could, not without many expressions of regret and convictions that her performance would be nothing to her now.

Just before eleven o'clock on Sunday he set out upon his sad errand. The funeral was to be immediately after the morning service, and as there were four good miles to walk, driving being inconvenient, it became necessary to start comparatively early. Half an hour later

would certainly have answered his purpose quite as well, yet at the last moment nothing would content his ardent mind but that he must go a mile out of his way in the direction of the school, in the hope of getting a glimpse of his Love as she started for church.

Striking therefore into the lane towards the school, instead of across the ewelease direct to Charmley, he arrived opposite her door as his goddess emerged.

If ever a woman looked a divinity Fancy Day appeared one that morning as she floated down those school steps, in the form of a nebulous collection of colours inclining to blue. With an audacity unparalleled in the whole history of village-schoolmistresses at this date — partly owing, no doubt, to papa's respectable accumulation of cash, which rendered her profession not altogether one of necessity — she had actually donned a hat and feather and lowered her hitherto plainly looped-up hair, which now fell about her shoulders in a profusion of curls. Poor Dick was astonished: he had never seen her look so distractingly beautiful before save on Christmas-eve, when her hair was in the same luxuriant condition of freedom. But his first burst of delighted surprise was followed by less comfortable feelings as soon as his brain recovered its power to think.

Fancy had blushed; — was it with confusion? She had also involuntarily pressed back her curls. She had not expected him.

'Fancy, you didn't know me for a moment in my funeral clothes, did you?'

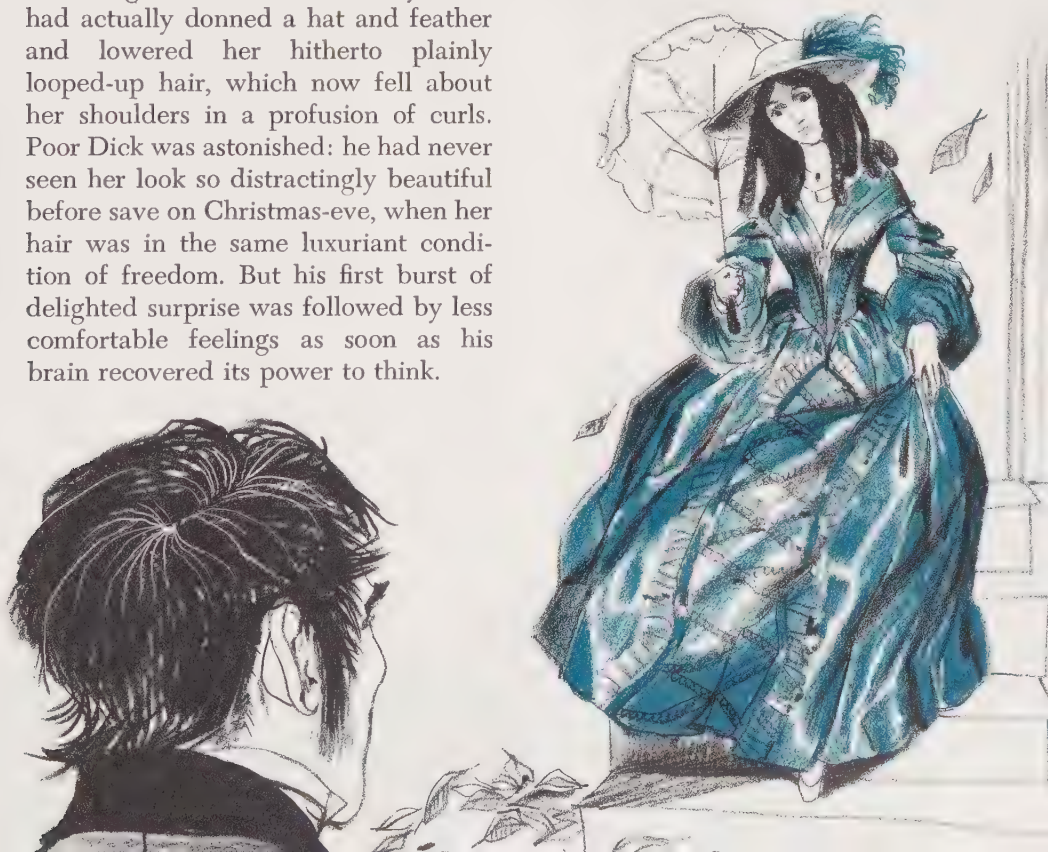
'Good-morning, Dick — no, really, I didn't know you for an instant in such a sad suit.'

He looked again at the gay tresses and hat. 'You've never dressed so charming before, dearest.'

'I like to hear you praise me in that way, Dick,' she said, smiling archly. 'It is meat and drink to a woman. Do I look nice really?'

'Fie! you know it. Did you remember, — I mean didn't you remember about my going away to-day?'

'Well, yes, I did, Dick; but, you know, I wanted to look well; — forgive me.'



'Yes, darling; yes, of course, — there's nothing to forgive. No, I was only thinking that when we talked on Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday and Friday about my absence to-day, and I was so sorry for it, you said, Fancy, so were you sorry, and almost cried, and said it would be no pleasure to you to be the attraction of the church to-day since I could not be there.'

'My dear one, neither will it be so much pleasure to me. . . . But I do take a little delight in my life, I suppose,' she pouted.

'Apart from mine?'

She looked at him with perplexed eyes. 'I know you are vexed with me, Dick, and it is because the first Sunday I have curls and a hat and feather since I have been here happens to be the very day you are away and won't be with me. Yes, say it is, for that is it! And you think that all this week I ought to have remembered you wouldn't be here to-day, and not have cared to be better dressed than usual. Yes, you do, Dick, and it is rather unkind!'

'No, no,' said Dick earnestly and simply, 'I didn't think so badly of you as

that. I only thought that — if *you* had been going away, I shouldn't have tried new attractions for the eyes of other people. But then of course you and I are different, naturally.'

'Well, perhaps we are.'

'Whatever will the vicar say, Fancy?'

'I don't fear what he says in the least!' she answered proudly. 'But he won't say anything of the sort you think. No, no.'

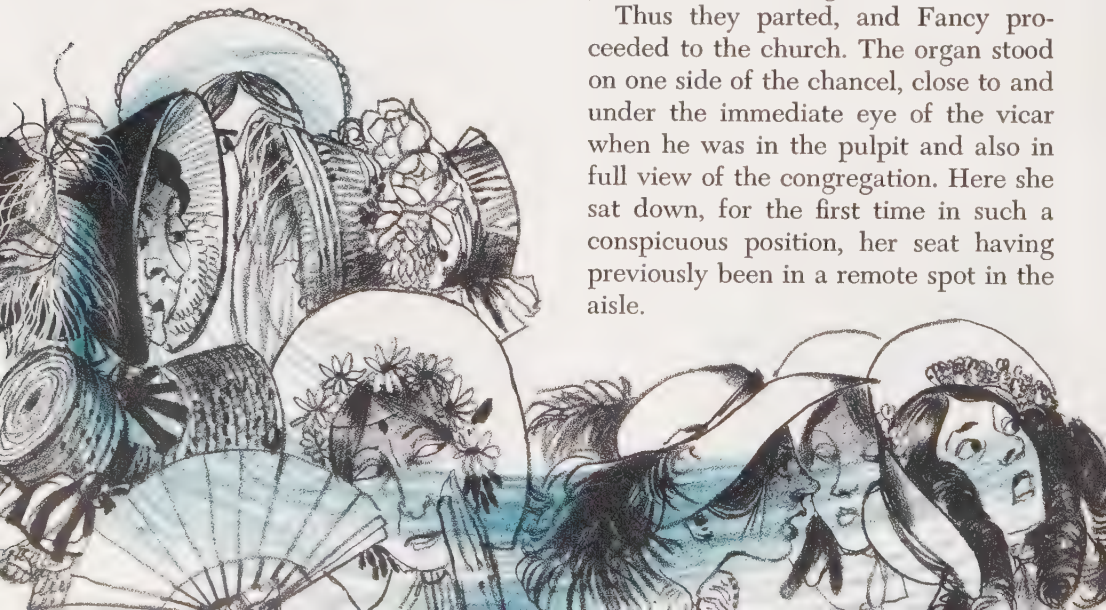
'He can hardly have conscience to, indeed.'

'Now come, you say, Dick, that you quite forgive me, for I must go,' she said with sudden gaiety, and skipped backwards into the porch. 'Come here, sir; — say you forgive me, and then you shall kiss me; — you never have yet when I have worn curls, you know. Yes, just where you want to so much, — yes, you may!'

Dick followed her into the inner corner, where he was probably not slow in availing himself of the privilege offered.

'Now that's a treat for you, isn't it?' she continued. 'Good-bye, or I shall be late. Come and see me to-morrow: you'll be tired to-night.'

Thus they parted, and Fancy proceeded to the church. The organ stood on one side of the chancel, close to and under the immediate eye of the vicar when he was in the pulpit and also in full view of the congregation. Here she sat down, for the first time in such a conspicuous position, her seat having previously been in a remote spot in the aisle.



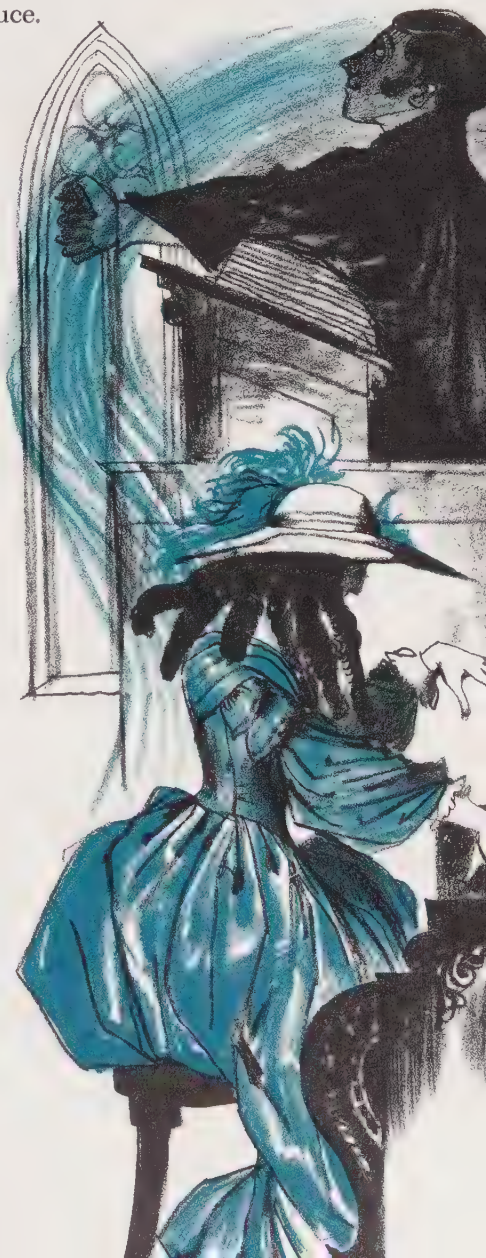
'Good heavens — disgracefull! Curls and a hat and feather!' said the daughters of the small gentry, who had either only curly hair without a hat and feather, or a hat and feather without curly hair. 'A bonnet for church always!' said sober matrons.

That Mr. Maybold was conscious of her presence close beside him during his sermon; that he was not at all angry at her development of costume; that he admired her, she perceived. But she did not see that he loved her during that sermon-time as he had never loved a woman before; that her proximity was a strange delight to him; and that he gloried in her musical success that morning in a spirit quite beyond a mere cleric's glory at the inauguration of a new order of things.

The old choir, with humbled hearts, no longer took their seats in the gallery as heretofore (which was now given up to the school-children who were not singers, and a pupil-teacher), but were scattered about with their wives in different parts of the church. Having nothing to do with conducting the service for almost the first time in their lives they all felt awkward, out of place, abashed, and inconvenienced by their hands. The tranter had proposed that they should stay away to-day and go nutting, but grandfather William would not hear of such a thing for a moment. 'No,' he replied reproachfully, and quoted a verse: "'Though this has come upon us let not our hearts be turned back, or our steps go out of the way.'"

So they stood and watched the curls of hair trailing down the back of the successful rival, and the waving of her feather as she swayed her head. After a few timid notes and uncertain

touches her playing became markedly correct, and towards the end full and free. But, whether from prejudice or unbiased judgment, the venerable body of musicians could not help thinking that the simpler notes they had been wont to bring forth were more in keeping with the simplicity of their old church than the crowded chords and interludes it was her pleasure to produce.





INTO TEMPTATION

CHAPTER VI

THE day was done, and Fancy was again in the school-house. About five o'clock it began to rain, and in rather a dull frame of mind she wandered into the schoolroom for want of something better to do. She was thinking — of her lover Dick Dewy? Not precisely. Of how weary she was of living alone; how unbearable it would be to return to Yalbury under the rule of her strange-tempered step-mother; that it was far better to be married to anybody than do that; that eight or nine long months had yet to be lived through ere the wedding could take place.

At the side of the room were high windows of Ham-hill stone, upon either sill of which she could sit by first mounting a desk and using it as a foot-stool. As the evening advanced here she perched herself, as was her custom on such wet and gloomy occasions, put on

a light shawl and bonnet, opened the window, and looked out at the rain.

The window overlooked a field called the Grove, and it was the position from which she used to survey the crown of Dick's passing hat in the early days of their acquaintance and meetings. Not a living soul was now visible anywhere; the rain kept all people indoors who were not forced abroad by necessity, and necessity was less importunate on Sundays than during the week.

Sitting here and thinking again — of her lover, or of the sensation she had created at church that day? — well, it is unknown — thinking and thinking she saw a dark masculine figure arising into distinctness at the further end of the Grove — a man without an umbrella. Nearer and nearer he came, and she perceived that he was in deep mourning, and then that it was Dick.

Yes, in the fondness and foolishness of his young heart, after walking four miles in a drizzling rain without overcoat or umbrella and in face of a remark from his love that he was not to come because he would be tired, he had made it his business to wander this mile out of his way again from sheer wish of spending ten minutes in her presence.

'O Dick, how wet you are!' she said, as he drew up under the window. 'Why, your coat shines as if it had been varnished, and your hat — my goodness, there's a streaming hat!'

'O, I don't mind, darling!' said Dick cheerfully. 'Wet never hurts me, though I am rather sorry for my best clothes.'

However, it couldn't be helped; we lent all the umbrellas to the women. I don't know when I shall get mine back.'

'And look, there's a nasty patch of something just on your shoulder.'

'Ah, that's japanning; it rubbed off the clamps of poor Jack's coffin when we lowered him from our shoulders upon the bier! I don't care about that, for 'twas the last deed I could do for him; and 'tis hard if you can't afford a coat for an old friend.'

Fancy put her hand to her mouth for half a minute. Underneath the palm of that little hand there existed for that half-minute a little yawn.

'Dick, I don't like you to stand there in the wet. And you mustn't sit down. Go home and change your things. Don't stay another minute.'

'One kiss after coming so far,' he pleaded.

'If I can reach, then.'

He looked rather disappointed at not being invited round to the door. She twisted from her seated position and bent herself downwards, but not even by standing on the plinth was it possible for Dick to get his lips into contact with hers as she held them. By great exertion she might have reached a little lower; but then she would have exposed her head to the rain.

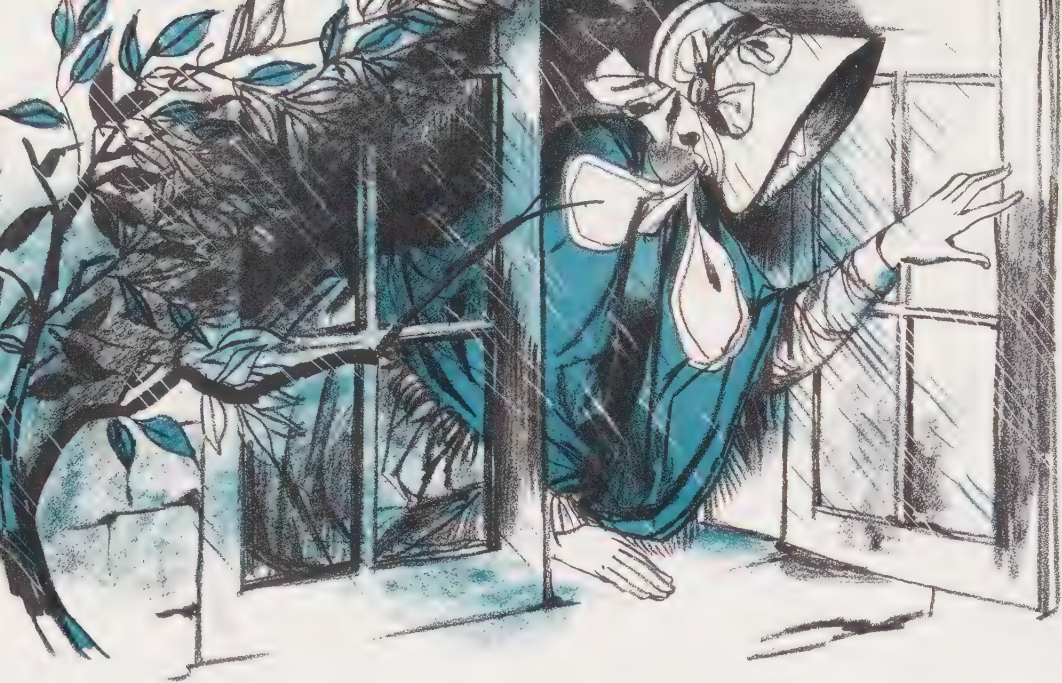
'Never mind, Dick; kiss my hand,' she said, flinging it down to him. 'Now, good-bye.'

'Good-bye.'

He walked slowly away, turning and turning again to look at her till he was out of sight. During the retreat she said to herself, almost involuntarily, and still conscious of that morning's triumph —

'I like Dick, and I love him; but how plain and sorry a man looks in the rain, with no umbrella, and wet through!'





As he vanished she made as if to descend from her seat; but glancing in the other direction she saw another form coming along the same track. It was also that of a man. He, too, was in black from top to toe; but he carried an umbrella.

He drew nearer, and the direction of the rain caused him so to slant his umbrella that from her height above the ground his head was invisible, as she was also to him. He passed in due time directly beneath her, and in looking down upon the exterior of his umbrella her feminine eyes perceived it to be of superior silk — less common at that date than since — and of elegant make. He reached the entrance to the building, and Fancy suddenly lost sight of him. Instead of pursuing the roadway as Dick had done he had turned sharply round into her own porch.

She jumped to the floor, hastily flung off her shawl and bonnet, smoothed and patted her hair till the curls hung in passable condition, and listened. No

knock. Nearly a minute passed, and still there was no knock. Then there arose a soft series of raps no louder than the tapping of a distant woodpecker, and barely distinct enough to reach her ears. She composed herself and flung open the door.

In the porch stood Mr. Maybold.

There was a warm flush upon his face and a bright flash in his eyes which made him look handsomer than she had ever seen him before.

‘Good-evening, Miss Day.’

‘Good-evening, Mr. Maybold,’ she said, in a strange state of mind. She had noticed, beyond the ardent hue of his face, that his voice had a singular tremor in it, and that his hand shook like an aspen leaf when he laid his umbrella in the corner of the porch. Without another word being spoken by either he came into the schoolroom, shut the door, and moved close to her. Once inside the expression of his face was no more discernible by reason of the increasing dusk of evening.

'I want to speak to you,' he then said; 'seriously — on a perhaps unexpected subject, but one which is all the world to me — I don't know what it may be to you, Miss Day.'

No reply.

'Fancy, I have come to ask you if you will be my wife?'

As a person who has been idly amusing himself with rolling a snowball might start at finding he had set in motion an avalanche, so did Fancy start at these words from the young vicar. And in the dead silence which followed them the breathings of the man and of the woman could be distinctly and separately heard; and there was this difference between them — his respirations gradually grew quieter and less rapid after the enunciation; hers, from having been low and regular, increased in quickness and force till she almost panted.

'I cannot, I cannot, Mr. Maybold — I cannot! Don't ask me!' she said.

'Don't answer in a hurry!' he entreated. 'And do listen to me. This is no sudden feeling on my part. I have

loved you for more than six months! Perhaps my late interest in teaching the children here has not been so single-minded as it seemed. You will understand my motive — like me better, perhaps, for honestly telling you that I have struggled against my emotion continually, because I have thought that it was not well for me to love you! But I resolved to struggle no longer; I have examined the feeling; and the love I bear you is as genuine as that I could bear any woman! I see your great charm; I respect your natural talents, and the refinement they have brought into your nature — they are quite enough, and more than enough for me! They are equal to anything ever required of the mistress of a quiet parsonage-house — the place in which I shall pass my days, wherever it may be situated. O Fancy, I have watched you, criticized you even severely, brought my feelings to the light of judgment, and still have found them rational, and such as any man might have expected to be inspired with by a woman like you! So there is nothing hurried, secret, or untoward in my desire to do this. Fancy, will you marry me?'

No answer was returned.

'Don't refuse; don't,' he implored. 'It would be foolish of you — I mean cruel! Of course, we would not live here, Fancy. I have had for a long time the offer of an exchange of livings with a friend in Yorkshire, but I have hitherto refused on account of my mother. There we would go. Your musical powers shall be still further developed; you shall have whatever pianoforte you like; you shall have anything, Fancy, anything to make you happy — pony-carriage, flowers, birds, pleasant society; yes, you



have enough in you for any society, after a few months of travel with me! Will you, Fancy, marry me?"

Another pause ensued, varied only by the surging of the rain against the window-panes, and then Fancy spoke, in a faint and broken voice.

'Yes, I will,' she said.

'God bless you, my own!' He advanced quickly, and put his arm out to embrace her. She drew back hastily. 'No no, not now!' she said in an agitated whisper. 'There are things; — but the temptation is, O, too strong, and I can't resist it; I can't tell you now, but I must tell you! Don't, please, don't come near me now! I want to think. I can scarcely get myself used to the idea of what I have promised yet.' The next minute

she turned to a desk, buried her face in her hands, and burst into a hysterical fit of weeping. 'O, leave me to myself!' she sobbed; 'leave me! O, leave me!'

'Don't be distressed; don't, dearest!' It was with visible difficulty that he restrained himself from approaching her. 'You shall tell me at your leisure what it is that grieves you so; I am happy — beyond all measure happy! — at having your simple promise.'

'And do go and leave me now!'

'But I must not, in justice to you, leave for a minute, until you are yourself again.'

'There then,' she said, controlling her emotion, and standing up; 'I am not disturbed now.'

He reluctantly moved towards the door. 'Good-bye!' he murmured tenderly. 'I'll come to-morrow about this time.'





SECOND THOUGHTS

CHAPTER VII

THE next morning the vicar rose early. The first thing he did was to write a long and careful letter to his friend in Yorkshire. Then, eating a little breakfast, he crossed the meadows in the direction of Casterbridge, bearing his letter in his pocket, that he might post it at the town office, and obviate the loss of one day in its transmission that would have resulted had he left it for the foot-post through the village.

It was a foggy morning, and the trees shed in noisy water-drops the moisture they had collected from the thick air, an acorn occasionally falling from its cup to the ground in company with the drippings. In the meads sheets of spiders'-web, almost opaque with wet, hung in folds over the fences, and the falling leaves appeared in every variety of brown, green, and yellow hue.

A low and merry whistling was heard on the highway he was approaching, then the light footsteps of a man going in the same direction as himself. On reaching the junction of his path with the road the vicar beheld Dick Dewy's open and cheerful face. Dick lifted his hat, and the vicar came out into the highway that Dick was pursuing.

'Good-morning, Dewy. How well you are looking!' said Mr. Maybold.



'Yes, sir, I am well — quite well! I am going to Casterbridge now, to get Smart's collar; we left it there Saturday to be repaired.'

'I am going to Casterbridge, so we'll walk together,' the vicar said. Dick gave a hop with one foot to put himself in step with Mr. Maybold, who proceeded: 'I fancy I didn't see you at church yesterday, Dewy. Or were you behind the pier?'

'No; I went to Charmley. Poor John Dunford chose me to be one of his bearers a long time before he died, and yesterday was the funeral. Of course I couldn't refuse, though I should have liked particularly to have been at home as 'twas the day of the new music.'

'Yes, you should have been. The musical portion of the service was successful — very successful indeed; and what is more to the purpose no ill-feeling whatever was evinced by any of the members of the old choir. They joined in the singing with the greatest goodwill.'

'Twas natural enough that I should want to be there, I suppose,' said Dick, smiling a private smile; 'considering who the organ-player was.'

At this the vicar reddened a little and said, 'Yes, yes,' though not at all comprehending Dick's true meaning, who, as he received no further reply, continued hesitatingly, and with another smile denoting his pride as a lover —

'I suppose you know what I mean, sir? You've heard about me and — Miss Day?'

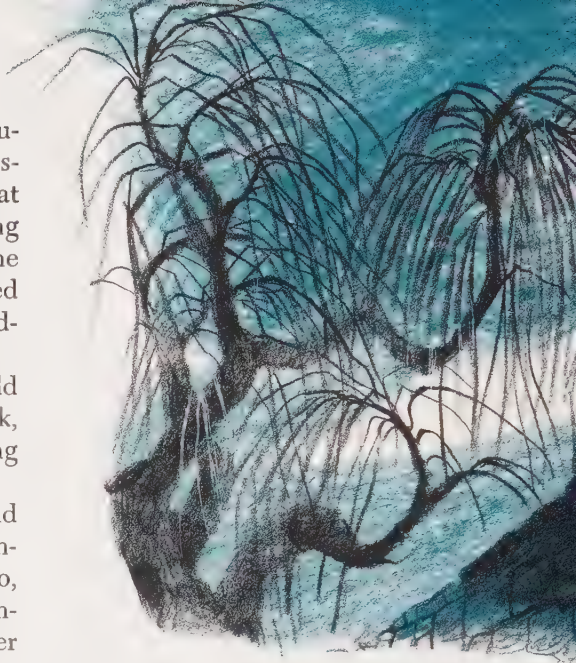
The red in Maybold's countenance went away: he turned and looked Dick in the face.

'No,' he said constrainedly, 'I've heard nothing whatever about you and Miss Day.'

'Why, she's my sweetheart, and we are going to be married next Midsummer. We are keeping it rather close just at present, because 'tis a good many months to wait; but it is her father's wish that we don't marry before, and of course we must submit. But the time 'ill soon slip along.'

'Yes, the time will soon slip along — Time glides away every day — yes.'

Maybold said these words, but he had no idea of what they were. He was conscious of a cold and sickly thrill throughout him; and all he reasoned was this, that the young creature whose graces had intoxicated him into making the most imprudent resolution of his life was less an angel than a woman.



'You see, sir,' continued the ingenuous Dick, 'twill be better in one sense. I shall by that time be the regular manager of a branch o' father's business which we think of starting elsewhere. It has very much increased lately, and we expect next year to keep a' extra couple of horses. We've already our eye on one — brown as a berry, neck like a rainbow, fifteen hands, and not a grey hair in her — offered us at twenty-five want a crown. And to kip pace with the times I have had some cards prented, and I beg leave to hand you one, sir.'

'Certainly,' said the vicar, mechanically taking the card that Dick offered him.

'I turn in here by Grey's Bridge,' said Dick. 'I suppose you go straight on and up town?'

'Yes.'

'Good-morning, sir.'

'Good-morning, Dewy.'

Maybold stood still upon the bridge, holding the card as it had been put into





his hand, and Dick's footsteps died away towards Durnover Mill. The vicar's first voluntary action was to read the card:—

DEWY AND SON,

TRANTERS AND HAULIERS,

MELLSTOCK.

N.B.—Furniture, Coals, Potatoes, Live and Dead Stock, removed to any distance on the shortest notice.

Mr. Maybold leant over the parapet of the bridge and looked into the river. He saw—without heeding—how the water came rapidly from beneath the arches, glided down a little steep, then spread itself over a pool in which dace, trout, and minnows sported at ease among the long green locks of weed that lay heaving and sinking with their roots towards the current. At the end of

ten minutes spent leaning thus he drew from his pocket the letter to his friend, tore it deliberately into such minute fragments that scarcely two syllables remained in juxtaposition, and sent the whole handful of shreds fluttering into the water. Here he watched them eddy, dart, and turn, as they were carried downwards towards the ocean and gradually disappeared from his view. Finally he moved off, and pursued his way at a rapid pace back again to Mellstock Vicarage.

Nerving himself by a long and intense effort he sat down in his study and wrote as follows:

‘DEAR MISS DAY,—*The meaning of your words, “the temptation is too strong,” of your sadness and your tears, has been brought home to me by an accident. I know to-day what I did not know yesterday—that you are not a free woman.*

‘Why did you not tell me—why didn’t you? Did you suppose I knew? No. Had I known, my conduct in coming to you as I did would have been reprehensible.

‘But I don’t chide you! Perhaps no blame attaches to you—I can’t tell. Fancy, though my opinion of you is assailed and disturbed in a way which cannot be expressed, I love you still, and my word to you holds good yet. But will you, in justice to an honest man who relies upon your word to him, consider whether, under the circumstances, you can honourably forsake him?—Yours ever sincerely,

‘ARTHUR MAYBOLD.’

He rang the bell. ‘Tell Charles to take these copybooks and this note to the school at once.’

The maid took the parcel and the letter, and in a few minutes a boy was seen to leave the vicarage gate with the one under his arm and the other in his hand. The vicar sat with his hand to his brow, watching the lad as he descended Church Lane and entered the waterside path which intervened between that spot and the school.

Here he was met by another boy, and after a free salutation and pugilistic frisk had passed between the two the second boy came on his way to the vicarage, and the other vanished out of sight.

The boy came to the door, and a note for Mr. Maybold was brought in.

He knew the writing. Opening the envelope with an unsteady hand he read the subjoined words:

'DEAR MR. MAYBOLD, — I have been thinking seriously and sadly through the whole of the night of the question you put to me last evening; and of my answer. That answer, as an honest woman, I had no right to give.

'It is my nature — perhaps all women's

— to love refinement of mind and manners; but even more than this, to be ever fascinated with the idea of surroundings more elegant and pleasing than those which have been customary. And you praised me, and praise is life to me. It was alone my sensations at these things which prompted my reply. Ambition and vanity they would be called; perhaps they are so.

'After this explanation I hope you will generously allow me to withdraw the answer I too hastily gave.

'And one more request. To keep the meeting of last night, and all that passed between us there, for ever a secret. Were it to become known it would utterly blight the happiness of a trusting and generous man, whom I love still, and shall love always. — Yours sincerely,

'FANCY DAY.'

The last written communication that ever passed from the vicar to Fancy was a note containing these words only:

'Tell him everything; it is best. He will forgive you.'

Discussion

1. Explain briefly the chapter titles.
2. To what extent does the love of Dick and Fancy disprove the poet Byron's contention that "Man's love is of man's life a thing apart, 'Tis woman's whole existence"?
3. Recall earlier incidents which illuminate Hardy's figurative comparison: "As a person who has been idly amusing himself with rolling a snowball might start at finding he had set in motion an avalanche, so did Fancy start at these words from the young vicar."
4. Point out lines which indicate a certain snobbery in Maybold's proposal.
5. Why does Hardy have the two letters cross each other rather than letting one letter be an answer to the other?



PART THE FIFTH
CONCLUSION

'THE KNOT THERE'S NO
UNTYING'

CHAPTER I

THE last day of the story is dated just subsequent to that point in the development of the seasons when country people go to bed among nearly naked trees, are lulled to sleep by a fall of rain, and awake next morning among green ones; when the landscape appears embarrassed with the sudden weight and brilliancy of its leaves; when the night-jar comes and strikes up for the summer his tune of one note; when the apple-trees have bloomed, and the roads and orchard-grass become spotted with fallen petals; when the faces of the delicate flowers are darkened and their heads weighed down by the throng of honey-bees, which increase their humming till humming is too mild a term for the all-pervading sound; and when cuckoos, blackbirds, and sparrows, that have hitherto been merry and respectful

neighbours, become noisy and persistent intimates.

The exterior of Geoffrey Day's house in Yalbury Wood appeared exactly as was usual at that season, but a frantic barking of the dogs at the back told of unwonted movements somewhere within. Inside the door the eyes beheld a gathering which was a rarity indeed for the dwelling of the solitary wood-steward and keeper.

About the room were sitting and standing, in various gnarled attitudes, our old acquaintance grandfathers James and William, the tranter, Mr. Penny, two or three children, including Jimmy and Charley, besides three or four country ladies and gentlemen from a greater distance who do not require any distinction by name. Geoffrey was seen and heard stamping about the out-

house and among the bushes of the garden, attending to details of daily routine before the proper time arrived for their performance, in order that they might be off his hands for the day. He appeared with his shirt-sleeves rolled up; his best new nether garments, in which he had arrayed himself that morning, being temporarily disguised under a week-day apron whilst these proceedings were in operation. He occasionally glanced at the hives in passing to see if his wife's bees were swarming, ultimately rolling down his shirt-sleeves and going indoors, talking to tranter Dewy whilst buttoning the wristbands, to save time; next going upstairs for his best waistcoat, and coming down again to make another remark whilst buttoning that, during the time looking fixedly in the tranter's face as if he were a looking-glass.

The furniture had undergone attenuation to an alarming extent, every duplicate piece having been removed, including the clock by Thomas Wood;



Ezekiel Saunders being at last left sole referee in matters of time.

Fancy was stationary upstairs, receiving her layers of clothes and adornments and answering by short fragments of laughter which had more fidgetiness than mirth in them, remarks that were made from time to time by Mrs. Dewy and Mrs. Penny, who were assisting her at the toilet, Mrs. Day having pleaded a





queerness in her head as a reason for shutting herself up in an inner bedroom for the whole morning. Mrs. Penny appeared with nine corkscrew curls on each side of her temples, and a back comb stuck upon her crown like a castle on a steep.

The conversation just now going on was concerning the banns, the last pub-

lication of which had been on the Sunday previous.

'And how did they sound?' Fancy subtly inquired.

'Very beautiful indeed,' said Mrs. Penny. 'I never heard any sound better.'

'But *how*?'

'O, so natural and elegant, didn't they, Reuben!' she cried through the chinks of the unceiled floor to the tranter downstairs.

'What's that?' said the tranter, looking up inquiringly at the floor above him for an answer.

'Didn't Dick and Fancy sound well when they were called home in church last Sunday?' came downwards again in Mrs. Penny's voice.

'Ay, that they did, my sonnies! — especially the first time. There was a terrible whispering piece of work in the congregation, wasn't there, neighbour Penny?' said the tranter, taking up the



thread of conversation on his own account and, in order to be heard in the room above, speaking very loud to Mr. Penny, who sat at the distance of three feet from him, or rather less.

'I never can mind seeing such a whispering as there was,' said Mr. Penny, also loudly, to the room above. 'And such sorrowful envy on the maidens' faces; really, I never did see such envy as there was!'

Fancy's lineaments varied in innumerable little flushes and her heart palpitated innumerable little tremors of pleasure. 'But perhaps,' she said, with assumed indifference, 'it was only because no religion was going on just then?'

'O, no; nothing to do with that. 'Twas because of your high standing in the parish. It was just as if they had one and all caught Dick kissing and coling ye to death, wasn't it, Mrs. Dewy?'

'Ay; that 'twas.'

'How people will talk about one's doings!' Fancy exclaimed.

'Well, if you make songs about yourself, my dear, you can't blame other people for singing 'em.'

'Mercy me! how shall I go through it?' said the young lady again, but merely to those in the bedroom, with a breathing of a kind between a sigh and a pant, round shining eyes, and warm face.

'O, you'll get through it well enough,

child,' said Mrs. Dewy placidly. 'The edge of the performance is took off at the calling home; and when once you get up to the chancel end o' the church you feel as saucy as you please. I'm sure I felt as brave as a sodger all through the deed — though of course I dropped my face and looked modest, as was becoming to a maid. Mind you do that, Fancy.'

'And I walked into the church as quiet as a lamb, I'm sure,' subjoined Mrs. Penny. 'There, you see Penny is such a little small man. But certainly I was flurried in the inside o' me. Well, thinks I, 'tis to be, and here goes! And do you do the same: say, "'Tis to be, and here goes!'"'

'Is there such wonderful virtue in "'Tis to be, and here goes!'"?' inquired Fancy.

'Wonderful! 'Twill carry a body through it all from wedding to churching¹⁴, if you only let it out with spirit enough.'

'Very well, then,' said Fancy, blushing. 'Tis to be, and here goes!'

'That's a girl for a husband!' said Mrs. Dewy.

'I do hope he'll come in time!' continued the bride-elect, inventing a new cause of affright now that the other was demolished.

'T'would be a thousand pities if he didn't come, now you be so brave,' said Mrs. Penny.

Grandfather James, having overheard some of these remarks, said downstairs with mischievous loudness —

'I've known some would-be weddings when the men didn't come.'

'They've happened not to come, be-



¹⁴churching. Giving of thanks when a woman returns to church after childbirth.

fore now, certainly,' said Mr. Penny, cleaning one of the glasses of his spectacles.

'O, do hear what they are saying downstairs,' whispered Fancy. 'Hush, hush!'

She listened.

'They have, haven't they, Geoffrey?' continued grim grandfather James, as Geoffrey entered.

'Have what?' said Geoffrey.

'The men have been known not to come.'

'That they have,' said the keeper.

'Ay; I've knowed times when the wedding had to be put off through his not appearing, being tired of the woman. And another case I knowed was when the man was caught in a man-trap crossing Oaker's Wood, and the three months had run out before he got well, and the banns had to be published over again.'

'How horrible!' said Fancy.

'They only say it on purpose to tease 'ee, my dear,' said Mrs. Dewy.

'Tis quite sad to think what wretched shifts poor maids have been put to,' came again from downstairs. 'Ye should hear Clerk Wilkins, my brother-law, tell his experiences in marrying couples these last thirty year: sometimes one thing, sometimes another — 'tis quite heart-rending — enough to make your hair stand on end.'

'Those things don't happen very often, I know,' said Fancy with smouldering uneasiness.

'Well, really 'tis time Dick was here,' said the tranter.

'Don't keep on at me so, grandfather James and Mr. Dewy, and all you down there!' Fancy broke out, unable to endure any longer. 'I am sure I shall die, or do something, if you do!'



'Never you hearken to these old chaps, Miss Day!' cried Nat Callcome the best man, who had just entered, and threw his voice upward through the chinks of the floor as the others had done. "'Tis all right; Dick's coming on like a wild feller; he'll be here in a minute. The hive o' bees his mother gie'd en for his new garden swarmed jist as he was starting, and he said, "I can't afford to lose a stock o' bees; no, that I can't, though I fain would; and Fancy wouldn't wish it on any account." So he jist stopped to ting to 'em and shake 'em.'

'A genuine wise man,' said Geoffrey.

'To be sure what a day's work we had yesterday!' Mr. Callcome continued, lowering his voice as if it were not necessary any longer to include those in the room above among his audience, and selecting a remote corner of his best clean handkerchief for wiping his face. 'To be sure!'

'Things so heavy, I suppose,' said Geoffrey, as if reading through the chimney-window from the far end of the vista.

'Ay,' said Nat, looking round the room at points from which furniture had been

removed. 'And so awkward to carry, too. 'Twas ath'art and across Dick's garden; in and out Dick's door; up and down Dick's stairs; round and round Dick's chammers till legs were worn to stumps: and Dick is so particular, too. And the stores of victuals and drink that lad has laid in: why, 'tis enough for Noah's ark! I'm sure I never wish to see a choicer half-dozen of hams than he's got there in his chimley; and the cider I tasted was a very pretty drop, indeed; — none could desire a prettier cider.'

'They be for the love and the stalled ox both. Ah, the greedy martels!' said grandfather James.

'Well, may-be they be. "Surely," says I, "that couple between 'em have heaped up so much furniture and victuals that anybody would think they were going to take hold the big end of married life first, and begin wi' a grown-up family." Ah, what a bath of heat we two chaps were in, to be sure, a-getting that furniture in order!'

'I do so wish the room below was ceiled,' said Fancy as the dressing went on; 'we can hear all they say and do down there.'

'Hark! Who's that?' exclaimed a small pupil-teacher, who also assisted this morning to her great delight. She ran halfway down the stairs and peeped round the banister. 'O, you should, you should, you should!' she exclaimed, scrambling up to the room again.

'What?' said Fancy.

'See the bridesmaids! They've just a-come! 'Tis wonderful, really! 'tis wonderful how muslin can be brought to it. There, they don't look a bit like themselves, but like some very rich sisters o' theirs that nobody knew they had!'

'Make them come up to me, make them come up!' cried Fancy ecstatically;

and the four damsels appointed, namely, Miss Susan Dewy, Miss Bessie Dewy, Miss Vashti Sniff, and Miss Mercy Onmey surged upstairs and floated along the passage.

'I wish Dick would come!' was again the burden of Fancy.

The same instant a small twig and flower from the creeper outside the door flew in at the open window, and a masculine voice said, 'Ready, Fancy dearest?'

'There he is, he is!' cried Fancy, tittering spasmodically and breathing as it were for the first time that morning.

The bridesmaids crowded to the window and turned their heads in the direction pointed out, at which motion eight earrings all swung as one: — not look-



ing at Dick because they particularly wanted to see him, but with an important sense of their duty as obedient ministers of the will of that apotheosised being — the Bride.

'He looks very taking!' said Miss Vashti Sniff, a young lady who blushed cream-colour and wore yellow bonnet-ribbons.

Dick was advancing to the door in a painfully new coat of shining cloth, primrose-coloured waistcoat, hat of the same painful style of newness, and with an extra quantity of whiskers shaved off his face and hair cut to an unwonted shortness in honour of the occasion.

'Now I'll run down,' said Fancy, looking at herself over her shoulder in the glass, and flitting off.

'O Dick!' she exclaimed, 'I am so glad you are come! I knew you would, of

course, but I thought, O, if you shouldn't!'

'Not come, Fancy! Het or wet, blow or snow, here come I to-day! Why, what's possessing your little soul? You never used to mind such things a bit.'

'Ah, Mr. Dick, I hadn't hoisted my colours and committed myself then!' said Fancy.

'Tis a pity I can't marry the whole five of ye!' said Dick, surveying them all round.

'Heh-heh-heh!' laughed the four bridesmaids, and Fancy privately touched Dick and smoothed him down behind his shoulder as if to assure herself that he was there in flesh and blood as her own property.

'Well, whoever would have thought such a thing?' said Dick, taking off his hat, sinking into a chair, and turning to the elder members of the company.

The latter arranged their eyes and



lips to signify that in their opinion nobody could have thought such a thing, whatever it was.

'That my bees should ha' swarmed just then, of all times and seasons!' continued Dick, throwing a comprehensive glance like a net over the whole auditory. 'And 'tis a fine swarm, too: I haven't seen such a fine swarm for these ten years.'

'A' excellent sign,' said Mrs. Penny, from the depths of experience. 'A' excellent sign.'

'I am glad everything seems so right,' said Fancy with a breath of relief.

'And so am I,' said the four bridesmaids with much sympathy.

'Well, bees can't be put off,' observed the inharmonious grandfather James. 'Marrying a woman is a thing you can do at any moment; but a swarm o' bees won't come for the asking.'

Dick fanned himself with his hat. 'I can't think,' he said thoughtfully, 'what-ever 'twas I did to offend Mr. Maybold, — a man I like so much, too. He rather took to me when he came first, and used to say he should like to see me married, and that he'd marry me, whether the young woman I chose lived in his parish or no. I just hinted to him of it when I put in the banns, but he didn't seem to take kindly to the notion now, and so I said no more. I wonder how it was.'

'I wonder!' said Fancy, looking into

vacancy with those beautiful eyes of hers — too refined and beautiful for a tranter's wife; but, perhaps, not too good.

'Altered his mind, as folks will, I suppose,' said the tranter. 'Well, my sonnies, there'll be a good strong party looking at us to-day as we go along.'

'And the body of the church,' said Geoffrey, 'will be lined with females, and a row of young fellers' heads, as far down as the eyes, will be noticed just above the sills of the chancel-winders.'

'Ay, you've been through it twice,' said Reuben, 'and well mid know.'

'I can put up with it for once,' said Dick, 'or twice either, or a dozen times.'

'O Dick!' said Fancy reproachfully.

'Why, dear, that's nothing, — only just a bit of a flourish. You be as nervous as a cat to-day.'

'And then, of course, when 'tis all over,' continued the tranter, 'we shall march two and two round the parish.'

'Yes, sure,' said Mr. Penny: 'two and two: every man hitched up to his woman, 'a b'lieve.'

'I never can make a show of myself in that way!' said Fancy, looking at Dick to ascertain if he could.

'I'm agreed to anything you and the company like, my dear!' said Mr. Richard Dewy heartily.

'Why, we did when we were married, didn't we, Ann?' said the tranter; 'and so do everybody, my sonnies.'

'And so did we,' said Fancy's father.

'And so did Penny and I,' said Mrs. Penny: 'I wore my best Bath clogs, I remember, and Penny was cross because it made me look so tall.'

'And so did father and mother,' said Miss Mercy Onmey.

'And I mean to, come next Christmas!' said Nat the groomsman vigor-



ously, and looking towards the person of Miss Vashti Sniff.

'Respectable people don't nowadays,' said Fancy. 'Still, since poor mother did, I will.'

'Ay,' resumed the tranter, "'twas on a White Tuesday when I committed it. Mellstock Club walked the same day, and we new-married folk went a-gaying round the parish behind 'em. Everybody used to wear something white at Whitsuntide in them days. My sonnies, I've got the very white trousers that I wore, at home in box now. Ha'n't I, Ann?'

'You had till I cut 'em up for Jimmy,' said Mrs. Dewy.

'And we ought, by rights, after doing this parish, to go round Higher and Lower Mellstock, and call at Viney's, and so work our way hither again across He'th,' said Mr. Penny, recovering scent of the matter in hand. 'Dairyman Viney is a very respectable man, and so is Farmer Kex, and we ought to show ourselves to them.'

'True,' said the tranter, 'we ought to go round Mellstock to do the thing well. We shall form a very striking object walking along in rotation, good-now, neighbours?'

'That we shall: a proper pretty sight for the nation,' said Mrs. Penny.

'Hullo!' said the tranter, suddenly catching sight of a singular human figure standing in the doorway, and wearing a long smock-frock of pillow-case cut and of snowy whiteness. 'Why, Leaf! whatever dost thou do here?'

'I've come to know if so be I can come to the wedding — hee-heel!' said Leaf in a voice of timidity.

'Now, Leaf,' said the tranter reproachfully, 'you know we don't want 'ee here to-day: we've got no room for 'ee, Leaf.'



'Thomas Leaf, Thomas Leaf, fie upon 'ee for prying!' said old William.

'I know I've got no head, but I thought, if I washed and put on a clane shirt and smock-frock, I might just call,' said Leaf, turning away disappointed and trembling.

'Poor feller!' said the tranter, turning to Geoffrey. 'Suppose we must let en come? His looks are rather against en, and he is terrible silly; but 'a have never been in jail, and 'a won't do no harm.'

Leaf looked with gratitude at the tranter for these praises, and then anxiously at Geoffrey, to see what effect they would have in helping his cause.

'Ay, let en come,' said Geoffrey decisively. 'Leaf, th't welcome, 'st know'; and Leaf accordingly remained.

They were now all ready for leaving the house, and began to form a procession in the following order: Fancy and her father, Dick and Susan Dewy, Nat Callcome and Vashti Sniff, Ted Waywood and Mercy Onmey, and Jimmy and Bessie Dewy. These formed the executive, and all appeared in strict wedding attire. Then came the tranter and Mrs. Dewy, and last of all Mr. and Mrs. Penny; — the tranter conspicuous by his enormous gloves, size eleven and three-quarters, which appeared at a distance like boxing gloves bleached and sat



rather awkwardly upon his brown hands; this hall-mark of respectability having been set upon himself to-day (by Fancy's special request) for the first time in his life.

'The proper way is for the bridesmaids to walk together,' suggested Fancy.

'What? 'Twas always young man and young woman, arm in crook, in my time!' said Geoffrey, astounded.

'And in mine!' said the tranter.

'And in ours!' said Mr. and Mrs. Penny.

'Never heard o' such a thing as woman and woman!' said old William; who, with grandfather James and Mrs. Day, was to stay at home.

'Whichever way you and the company like, my dear!' said Dick, who, being on the point of securing his right to Fancy, seemed willing to renounce all other rights in the world with the greatest pleasure. The decision was left to Fancy.

'Well, I think I'd rather have it the way mother had it,' she said, and the couples moved along under the trees, every man to his maid.

'Ah!' said grandfather James to grandfather William as they retired, 'I wonder which she thinks most about, Dick or her wedding raiment!'

'Well, 'tis their nature,' said grandfather William. 'Remember the words of the prophet Jeremiah: "Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire?"'

Now among dark perpendicular firs, like the shafted columns of a cathedral; now through a hazel copse, matted with primroses and wild hyacinths; now under broad beeches in bright young leaves they threaded their way into the high road over Yalbury Hill, which dipped at that point directly into the village of Geoffrey Day's parish; and in the space of a quarter of an hour Fancy found herself to be Mrs. Richard Dewy, though, much to her



surprise, feeling no other than Fancy Day still.

On the circuitous return walk through the lanes and fields, amid much chattering and laughter, especially when they came to stiles, Dick discerned a brown spot far up a turnip field.

'Why, 'tis Enoch!' he said to Fancy. 'I thought I missed him at the house this morning. How is it he's left you?'

'He drank too much cider, and it got into his head, and they put him in Weatherbury stocks for it. Father was obliged to get somebody else for a day or two, and Enoch hasn't had anything to do with the woods since.'

'We might ask him to call down to-night. Stocks are nothing for once, considering 'tis our wedding day.' The bridal party was ordered to halt.

'Eno-o-o-o-ch!' cried Dick at the top of his voice.

'Y-a-a-a-a-as!' said Enoch from the distance.

'D'ye know who I be-e-e-e-e-e?'

'No-o-o-o-o-o-o!'

'Dick Dew-w-w-w-wy!'

'O-h-h-h-h-h!'

'Just a-ma-a-a-a-arried!'

'O-h-h-h-h-h!'

'This is my wife, Fa-a-a-a-a-ancy!' (holding her up to Enoch's view as if she had been a nosegay).

'O-h-h-h-h-h!'

'Will ye come across to the party to-ni-i-i-i-i-ight!'

'Ca-a-a-a-a-an't!'

'Why n-o-o-o-o-o-ot?'

'Don't work for the family no-o-o-o-ow!'

'Not nice of Master Enoch,' said Dick as they resumed their walk.

'You mustn't blame en,' said Geoffrey; 'the man's not hisself now; he's in his morning frame of mind. When he's had a gallon o' cider or ale, or a pint or two of mead, the man's well enough, and his manners be as good as anybody's in the kingdom.'

UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE

CHAPTER II

THE point in Yalbury Wood which abutted on the end of Geoffrey Day's premises was closed with an ancient tree, horizontally of enormous extent, though having no great pretensions to height. Many hundreds of birds had been born amidst the boughs of this single tree; tribes of rabbits and hares had nibbled at its bark from year to year; quaint tufts of fungi had sprung from the cavities of its forks; and countless families of moles and earthworms had crept about its roots. Beneath and beyond its shade spread a carefully-tended grass-plot, its purpose being to supply a healthy exercise-ground for young chickens and pheasants: the hens, their mothers, being enclosed in coops placed upon the same green flooring.

All these encumbrances were now removed, and as the afternoon advanced the guests gathered on the spot, where music, dancing, and the singing of songs went forward with great spirit throughout the evening. The propriety of every one was intense, by reason of the influence of Fancy, who, as an additional precaution in this direction had strictly charged her father and the tranter to carefully avoid saying 'thee' and 'thou' in their conversation, on the plea that those ancient words sounded so very humiliating to persons of newer taste; also that they were never to be seen drawing the back of the hand



across the mouth after drinking — a local English custom of extraordinary antiquity, but stated by Fancy to be decidedly dying out among the better classes of society.

In addition to the local musicians present a man who had a thorough knowledge of the tambourine was invited from the village of Tantrum Clangley, — a place long celebrated for the skill of its inhabitants as performers on instruments of percussion. These important members of the assembly were relegated to a height of two or three feet from the ground, upon a temporary erection of planks supported by barrels. Whilst the dancing progressed the older persons sat in a group under the trunk of the tree, — the space being allotted to them somewhat grudgingly by the young ones, who were greedy of pirouetting room, — and fortified by a table against the heels of

the dancers. Here the gaffers and gamblers whose dancing days were over told stories of great impressiveness, and at intervals surveyed the advancing and retiring couples from the same retreat, as people on shore might be supposed to survey a naval engagement in the bay beyond; returning again to their tales when the pause was over. Those of the whirling throng who, during the rests between each figure, turned their eyes in the direction of these seated ones, were only able to discover, on account of the music and bustle, that a very striking circumstance was in course of narration — denoted by an emphatic sweep of the hand, snapping of the fingers, close of the lips, and fixed look into the centre of the listener's eye for the space of a quarter of a minute, which raised in that listener such a reciprocating working of face as to sometimes make the distant dancers half wish to know what such an interesting tale could refer to.

Fancy caused her looks to wear as much matronly expression as was obtainable out of six hours' experience as a wife, in order that the contrast between her own state of life and that of the unmarried young women present might be duly impressed upon the company: occasionally stealing glances of admiration at her left hand, but this quite privately; for her ostensible bearing concerning the matter was intended to show that, though she undoubtedly occupied the most wondrous position in the eyes of the world that had ever been attained, she was almost unconscious of the circumstance, and that the somewhat prominent position in which that wonderfully-emblazoned left hand was continually found to be placed when handing cups and saucers, knives,

forks, and glasses, was quite the result of accident. As to wishing to excite envy in the bosoms of her maiden companions by the exhibition of the shining ring, every one was to know it was quite foreign to the dignity of such an experienced married woman. Dick's imagination in the meantime was far less capable of drawing so much wontedness from his new condition. He had been for two or three hours trying to feel himself merely a newly-married man, but had been able to get no further in the attempt than to realize that he was Dick Dewy, the tranter's son, at a party given by Lord Wessex's head man-in-charge, on the outlying Yalbury estate, dancing and chatting with Fancy Day.

Five country dances, including 'Haste to the Wedding', two reels, and three fragments of hornpipes, brought them to the time for supper which, on account of the dampness of the grass from the immaturity of the summer season, was spread indoors. At the conclusion of the meal Dick went out to put the horse in; and Fancy, with the elder half of the four bridesmaids, retired upstairs to dress for the journey to Dick's new cottage near Mellstock.

'How long will you be putting on your bonnet, Fancy?' Dick inquired at the foot of the staircase. Being now a man of business and married he was strong on the importance of time, and doubled the emphasis of his words in conversing, and added vigour to his nods.

'Only a minute.'

'How long is that?'

'Well, dear, five.'

'Ah, sonnies!' said the tranter, as Dick retired, 'tis a talent of the female race that low numbers should stand for high,

more especially in manners of waiting, matters of age, and matters of money.'

'True, true, upon my body,' said Geoffrey.

'Ye spak with feeling, Geoffrey, seemingly.'

'Anybody that d'know my experience might guess that.'

'What's she doing now, Geoffrey?'

'Claning out all the upstairs drawers and cupboards, and dusting the second-best chainey — a thing that's only done once a year. "If there's work to be done I must do it," says she, "wedding or no."'

'Tis my belief she's a very good woman at bottom.'

'She's terrible deep, then.'

Mrs. Penny turned round. 'Well, 'tis humps and hollers with the best of us; but still and for all that, Dick and Fancy stand as fair a chance of having a bit of sunsheen as any married pair in the land.'

'Ay, there's no gainsaying it.'

Mrs. Dewy came up, talking to one person and looking at another. 'Happy, yes,' she said. 'Tis always so when a couple is so exactly in tune with one another as Dick and she.'

'When they be'n't too poor to have time to sing,' said grandfather James.

'I tell ye, neighbours, when the pinch comes,' said the tranter: 'when the oldest daughter's boots be only a size less than her mother's, and the rest o' the flock close behind her. A sharp time for a man that, my sonnies; a very sharp time! Chanticleer's comb is a-cut then, 'a believe.'

'That's about the form o't,' said Mr. Penny. 'That'll put the stuns upon a man, when you must measure mother and daughters' lasts to tell 'em apart.'

'You've no cause to complain, Reuben, of such a close-coming flock,' said

Mrs. Dewy; 'for ours was a straggling lot enough, God knows!'

'I d'know it, I d'know it,' said the tranter. 'You be a well-enough woman, Ann.'

Mrs. Dewy put her mouth in the form of a smile and put it back again without smiling.

'And if they come together, they go together,' said Mrs. Penny, whose family had been the reverse of the tranter's; 'and a little money will make either fate tolerable. And money can be made by our young couple, I know.'

'Yes, that it can!' said the impulsive voice of Leaf, who had hitherto humbly admired the proceedings from a



corner. 'It can be done — all that's wanted is a few pounds to begin with. That's all! I know a story about it!'

'Let's hear thy story, Leaf,' said the tranter. 'I never knew you were clever enough to tell a story. Silence, all of ye! Mr. Leaf will tell a story.'

'Tell your story, Thomas Leaf,' said grandfather William in the tone of a schoolmaster.

'Once,' said the delighted Leaf, in an uncertain voice, 'there was a man who lived in a house! Well, this man went thinking and thinking night and day. At last, he said to himself, as I might, "If I had only ten pound, I'd make a fortune." At last by hook or by crook, he got the ten pounds!'

'Only think of that!' said Nat Callcome satirically.

'Silence!' said the tranter.

'Well, now comes the interesting part of the story! In a little time he made that ten pounds twenty. Then a little time after that he doubled it, and made it forty. Well, he went on, and a good while after that he made it eighty, and on to a hundred. Well, by-and-by he made it two hundred! Well, you'd never believe it, but — he went on and made it four hundred! He went on, and what did he do? Why, he made it eight hundred! Yes, he did,' continued Leaf in the highest pitch of excitement, bringing down his fist upon his knee with such force that he quivered with the pain; 'yes, and he went on and made it A THOUSAND!'

'Hear, hear!' said the tranter. 'Better than the history of England, my sonnies!'

'Thank you for your story, Thomas Leaf,' said grandfather William; and then Leaf gradually sank into nothingness again.

Amid a medley of laughter, old shoes, and elder-wine, Dick and his bride took their departure side by side in the excellent new spring-cart which the young





tranter now possessed. The moon was just over the full, rendering any light from lamps or their own beauties quite unnecessary to the pair. They drove slowly along Yalbury Bottom, where the road passed between two copses. Dick was talking to his companion.

‘Fancy,’ he said, ‘why we are so happy is because there is such full confidence between us. Ever since that time you confessed to that little flirtation with Shiner by the river (which was really no flirtation at all), I have thought how artless and good you must be to tell me o’ such a trifling thing, and to be so frightened about it as you

were. It has won me to tell you my every deed and word since then. We’ll have no secrets from each other, darling, will we ever? — no secret at all.’

‘None from to-day,’ said Fancy. ‘Hark! what’s that?’

From a neighbouring thicket was suddenly heard to issue in a loud, musical, and liquid voice —

‘Tippiwit! swe-e-et! ki-ki-ki! Come hither, come hither, come hither!’

‘O, ’tis the nightingale,’ murmured she, and thought of a secret she would never tell.

THE END

Discussion

1. Explain the two chapter titles.
2. Why does Fancy inquire so particularly about the sound of the banns?
3. What incident delayed Dick’s arrival? Do you think his interpretation of Fancy’s attitude toward the incident is correct?
4. How does the marriage ceremony affect Fancy? Why does Hardy make a point of mentioning this reaction?
5. What relationship does grandfather James see between wealth and happiness? Apply his views to Dick and Fancy.
6. What does Hardy gain by concluding the story as he does instead of ending it with the young couple driving off in the moonlight?

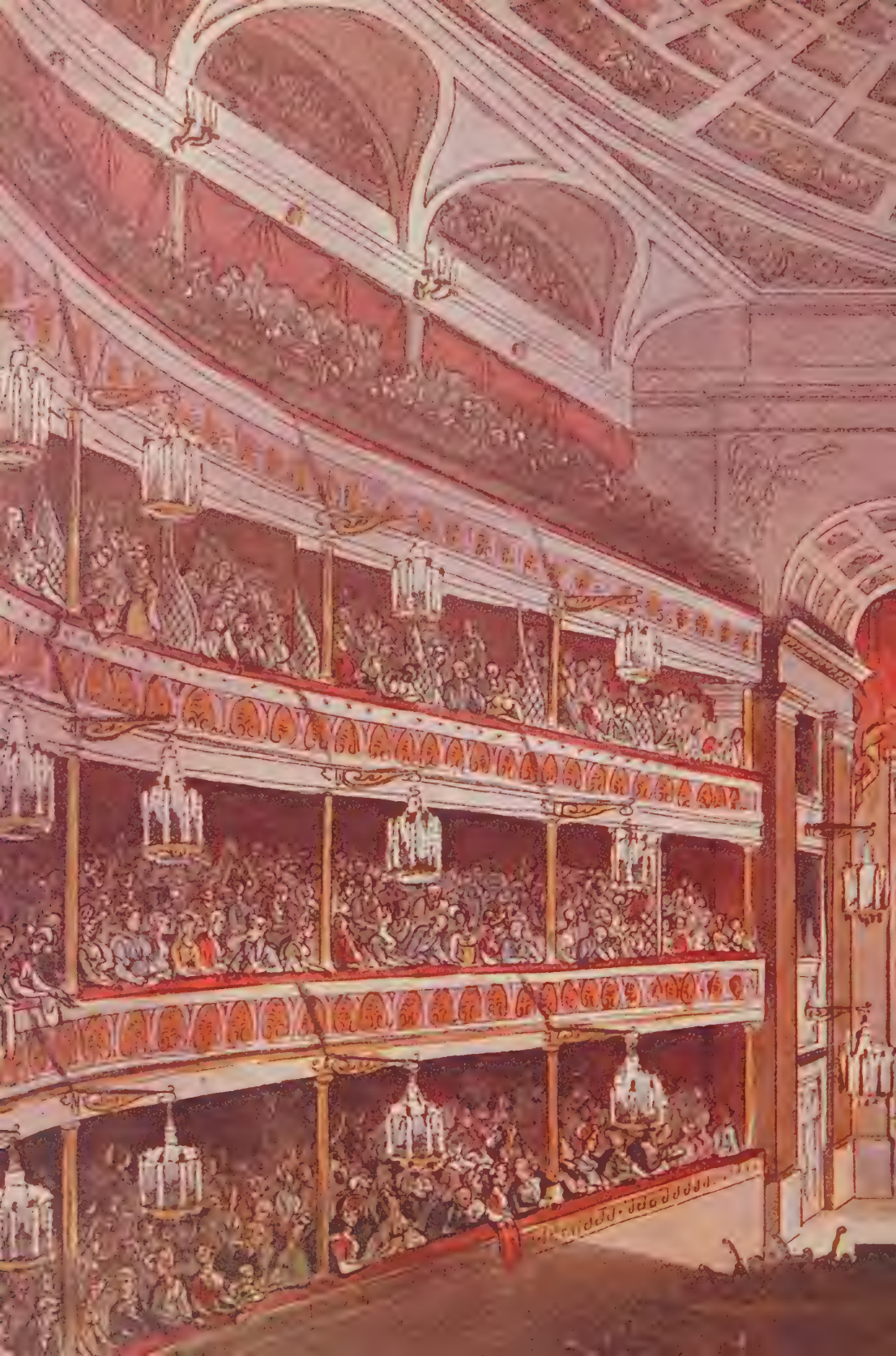
LOOKING BACK ON THE NOVEL

Discussion

1. Does Hardy's original title, *The Mellstock Quire*, seem more appropriate than *Under the Greenwood Tree*?
2. Hardy himself called this work a novel of character and environment. What specific incidents in the story support this claim?
3. If you did not know the story was written by a man, what internal evidence would lead you to this conclusion?
4. It is the mark of a good novel that the main personages show character development. Point out evidence that both Dick and Fancy mature as the story progresses.
5. What purpose is served by introducing apparently irrelevant characters like Leaf and Enoch?
6. Point out several places in the story where Hardy depends upon coincidence to advance his plot.
7. At what point in the story does the choir plot reach a climax? At what point does the love story reach a climax?
8. What keeps the romance of Dick and Fancy from seeming sentimental?
9. Are there any hints in *Under the Greenwood Tree* of the pessimism that was to mark Hardy's later novels?
10. In an unobtrusive way Hardy has given a number of his characters symbolic names. Can you find several names that seem significant?

Research

1. Students might well follow up class study of *Under the Greenwood Tree* with study on their own of a second Hardy novel. Especially recommended are *Far from the Madding Crowd*, *The Woodlanders*, *The Return of the Native*, and *The Mayor of Casterbridge*.
2. A variety of composition topics can be drawn from comparisons of "The Three Strangers" (page 74) and *Under the Greenwood Tree*. A few suggestions: "The Part Played by Weather in the Two Stories," "The Christening Party and the Christmas Dance," and "Music in Both Stories."



DRAMA



Although drama had flourished in Greece and, to a lesser extent, in Rome, it is not to these classical forerunners that English drama traces its origin. English drama began in the church, the very institution which had hastened the decline of drama in the later years of the Roman Empire. The new type of drama grew out of the rituals of the church in the tenth century.

To appeal to the largely illiterate population, the clergy used simple tableaux to supplement the regular services at Christmas and Easter. Considering these successful, they introduced an occasional biblical story in simple dramatic form. Originally performed in Latin, like the rest of the church service, the dramatizations were later performed in English. A synopsis of the story would be recited as a sort of prologue, and the action would then fol-

low, sometimes in pantomime, sometimes with spoken words. To meet popular demand the number of the plays and their length were increased. When audiences grew too large for the churches, the plays were moved to the front steps, and the audience stood in the churchyard. This change forced separation of the plays from regular church services.

Removal of the plays to the out-of-doors destroyed some of their spiritual feeling and encouraged greater realism and even humor, especially as a need for larger casts brought in lay actors. Deciding the plays were losing their religious purpose, the Pope in 1210 forbade the clergy to appear in plays outside the church.

The public wanted to keep the plays, however, and in England the town guilds took over their production. The subjects continued to be Biblical and performances were limited to church festival days. Sometimes a temporary wooden stage was erected in a town square. In the larger towns wagons were sometimes used as stages, so that each episode could be presented in one square and then moved on to another, while a different wagon succeeded it. Various guilds were often assigned the staging of successive episodes, and as the guilds vied with each other, productions became increasingly elaborate. Certain communities became famous for their plays, which attracted large crowds from surrounding areas, and were therefore good for business. Notable play series were the York Plays, the Wakefield Plays, the Chester Plays, and the Coventry Plays.

The terms "Mysteries" and "Miracles" were used somewhat interchangeably for the church-originated plays. How-

Below: Miracle Play "The Martyrdom of Saint Apollonia." Opposite: The Swan Theatre in Shakespeare's day.



ever, those dealing with Gospel events only, especially the Nativity, the Passion, and the Resurrection, were generally called Mysteries, while the lives of saints, for obvious reasons, were usually called Miracles.

In the fifteenth century an offshoot of the Mystery Plays developed, called the Morality Play. The purpose of the Morality Plays was to teach people a lesson about living rather than to present Biblical history. The greatest surviving Morality Play is *Everyman*.

It is interesting to know that as a boy William Shakespeare saw a number of Morality Plays, brought to Stratford by London players. One can speculate that this early contact with drama may have planted the seeds that later became *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* and his other great plays.

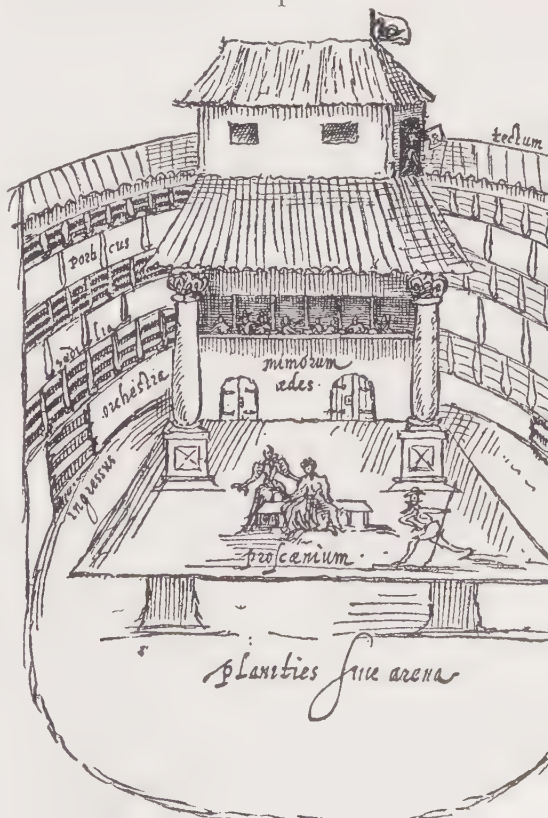
The church-originated drama flourished for six centuries and is, indeed, not dead yet. The Passion Play is the chief modern survival of the Mysteries, the most famous being the one performed at Oberammergau, Germany, every ten years. In the summer of 1956 a Miracle Play performed in the square in front of Notre Dame cathedral in Paris drew hundreds of thousands of spectators.

Although by the end of the fifteenth century drama had been disowned by the church, enough public interest had been generated for the theater to carry on on its own. The transition from a purpose of religious teaching to entertainment was gradual, and the first completely secular play, *Ralph Royster Doyster*, a comedy written by Nicholas Udall, did not appear until about 1533. The secularization of drama brought with it the problem of financing the plays. To make it possible to charge

admissions, performances were generally moved from public squares to inn yards.

The Renaissance brought a renewed interest in classical literature, and as secular drama developed in England it showed this influence. *Gorboduc* (1562), for instance, is written in blank verse, and, as in Greek plays, deaths do not take place on the stage but are merely reported. Written by Thomas Norton and Thomas Sackville, *Gorboduc* was the first English tragedy.

When James Burbage built the first theater in 1576,—and called it The Theater, since there was no other—the structure imitated the typical inn yard. The stage was erected on one side of a courtyard open to the weather. Here most of the audience stood. At the second-story level covered galleries sheltered the wealthier patrons. When The Curtain was built a year later it followed the same pattern. Both of





these theaters were located outside the walls of London because a growing Puritan influence would not tolerate "play-acting" inside the city.

In the ten years or so before Shakespeare came to London there was rapid development in playwriting. Widely popular was the chronicle play, based usually on Sir Thomas North's translation of Plutarch's *Lives* or on Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland*. These volumes provided exciting plots and what the audiences thought was accurate history. The playwrights were mostly university-educated men who had found an exciting way to use their learning for financial gain. They led rather wild lives and all died young. Notable among them were Robert Greene, George Peele, and Christopher Marlowe. The best of them was Marlowe, who wrote *Edward II*, *Tamburlaine*, *Dr. Faustus*, and *The Jew of Malta*. These plays were in blank verse, a

form which Marlowe popularized, and which Shakespeare was to adapt nobly to his own use.

The Elizabethan theater had three main acting areas: the outer stage, surrounded by audience on three sides; the inner stage, which could be shut off by a curtain; and the upper or balcony stage. As the main stage was uncurtained, the beginning of a play was announced by trumpet. Shakespeare usually opened with some attention-getting action. In *Macbeth*, for instance, it is the witches' scene.

The performance was continuous. In Shakespeare's plays, a scene is over when all the characters leave the stage. A new scene begins when another set of characters comes on. This flowing of one scene into another speeds up the action and gives a Shakespearean drama some similarity to a movie.

Because there were no sets and few props, the playwright had to put descriptions of the setting into the mouths

of the characters, as is done in radio plays today. Thus we have lines in *Macbeth* such as this:

DUNCAN: This castle hath a pleasant
seat; the air
Nimble and sweetly recommends itself
Unto our gentle senses.

It was also necessary for the characters to identify themselves or each other since the audience had no programs listing their names and relationships.

DUNCAN: What bloody man is that?
He can report,
As seemeth by his plight, of the revolt
The newest state.

MALCOLM: This is the sergeant
Who like a good and hardy soldier
fought
'Gainst my captivity.

Later, when Lady Macbeth enters, we have this line:

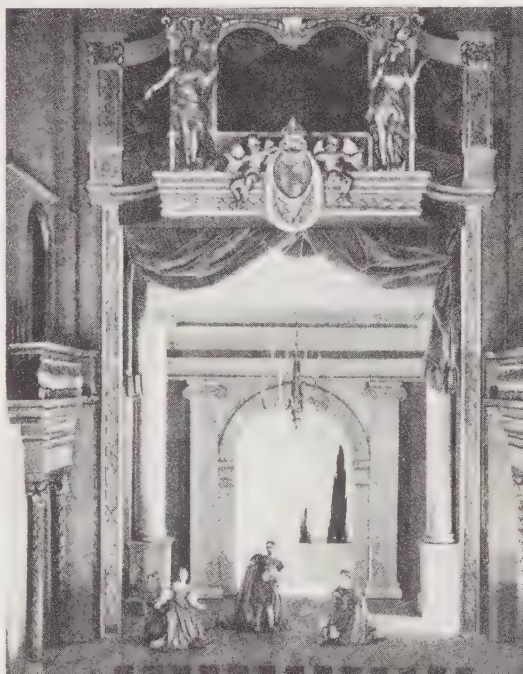
DUNCAN: See, see, our honored hostess!

Elizabethan costumes were used for most plays, even if the setting was ancient Rome or twelfth-century Scotland. In our day Margaret Webster was therefore not at all out of line when she staged *Julius Caesar* with uniforms and banners copied from Hitler's Germany.

During the Puritan rule (1642-60) the theaters were closed by government order. William D'Avenant, however, presented the first English opera, *The Siege of Rhodes*, before a small audience at Rutland House in 1656. This performance is particularly significant because in it a woman appeared on the English stage for the first time. This theatrical pioneer was the wife of Charles Coleman, who had composed the "recitation music" for the opera.

The Restoration period, so called because the English monarchy was restored in the person of Charles II, was a time of great theatrical activity. Two theaters were licensed, D'Avenant's and Thomas Killigrew's. Leading dramatists were Dryden, Wycherley, Congreve, Otway, Farquhar, Etherege, and Vanbrugh. Dryden's masterpiece was *All for Love* (1678), a tragedy written in blank verse, based on the story of Antony and Cleopatra. Another dramatist with a gift for tragic pathos was Thomas Otway, whose best plays are *Don Carlos* (1675), *The Orphan* (1680), and *Venice Preserved* (1682). The comedies of the period were more notable for their coarseness and indecency than for their humor. Besides original plays there were revivals of Shakespeare's plays. Shakespeare was considered "crude," and his plays were "improved" to meet the sophisticated standards of the day.

Opposite: Witches Scene in "Macbeth," 1853. *Below:* Dryden's "All for Love." Model of Dorset Garden Theatre.





Garrick and Mrs. Pritchard as Macbeth and Lady Macbeth.

In contrast to the sophistication and cynicism of the Restoration period, eighteenth-century drama was generally on the side of virtue. In the theater, as in essays, writers sought to raise the level of social conventions through generally kindly satire. Thus John Gay's *Beggar's Opera* poked broad fun at political corruption in Walpole's government. Produced in 1728, *The Beggar's Opera* has the distinction of being the first English comic opera. Its songs were set to popular English folk tunes, and the opera was almost fantastically successful.

The eighteenth century is notable for a great actor and theater manager who foreshadowed the theater of today, and for two dramatists whose plays still delight audiences. The actor was David Garrick (1717-79). He introduced a natural type of acting which soon replaced the declamatory style standard

in earlier periods. As manager of the Drury Lane theater, Garrick removed spectators from the stage, introduced hidden lighting, and began the practice of costuming plays according to the period represented.

The great playwrights were Oliver Goldsmith (1728-1774) and Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751-1816). Both wrote pungent social satire with great good humor, and both created characters of memorable individuality. To mention only one example, surely no one who has met Mrs. Malaprop can ever forget her "nice derangement of epitaphs." Both dramatists, but Sheridan especially, had a gift for witty dialogue.

After 1737 only two theaters were licensed, Drury Lane and Covent Garden. The latter was the scene of Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer* (1773) and Sheridan's *The Rivals* (1775).

Besides Garrick, the great actors of the period were Colley Cibber, Peg Woffington, Roger Kemble, who established a famous theatrical family which included his daughter, Sarah Kemble Siddons. Mrs. Siddons was particularly noted for her Shakespearean roles, her most famous interpretation being that of Lady Macbeth.

The Romantic Movement in the early nineteenth century brought many changes in the theater. In England almost all of the famous poets, including Shelley and Byron, attempted to restore poetic drama to the theater. The most popular plays, however, were revivals. Audiences went chiefly to see great actors such as Edmund Kean, the younger Kembles, Macready, and later Ellen Terry, Beerbohm Tree, and Henry Irving. The number of theaters increased greatly, especially in London.

Important new plays began to be

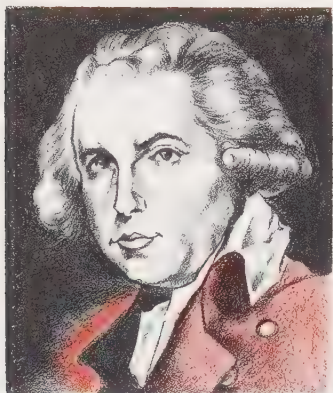
produced toward the close of the century. Under the influence of the Norwegian Henrik Ibsen, there was a trend toward a realistic drama dealing with social problems and using the speech of ordinary people. Improvements in lighting made better acting possible as it enabled actors to make use of facial expressions. Scenery was made more realistic. In theater building the nineteenth century saw the disappearance of the forestage, which had played so important a part in Shakespeare's day, and the lengthening of the auditorium from a semicircle to its present egg shape.

The most notable playwright of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950). Shaw was born in Ireland of English parentage, and though he lived most of his life in England, he took pride in his "Irish" outlook. His plays

Henry Irving and Ellen Terry as Macbeth and Lady Macbeth.



Richard B. Sheridan



George Bernard Shaw



are generally satires, and British politics and diplomacy are often victims of his wit. He poked fun, too, at social conventions, sometimes apparently for the sheer delight of being considered outrageous. Among Shaw's most famous plays are *Arms and the Man*, *Man and Superman*, *Major Barbara*, *Androcles and the Lion*, *Heartbreak House*, *Back to Methusaleh*, and *Saint Joan*.

A much gentler satirist than Shaw was the Scotsman James Matthew Barrie (1860-1935). Barrie's plays are characterized by sentiment and whimsy. Notable among them are *The Admirable Crichton*, *Peter Pan*, *What Every Woman Knows*, and *Dear Brutus*. Still a charming fantasy more than fifty years after it was written, *Peter Pan* was revived in New York in 1955 with great success, both on the stage and on television, where it was one of the first major productions in color. Barrie's *The Little Minister*, which first won fame as a novel, was later dramatized.

A third notable dramatist was John Galsworthy (1867-1933). He has at least seven important plays to his credit, all of them dealing with social problems, and most of them tragedies. Probably the best of his plays is *Loyalties*, which explores the subject of class loyalty and finds it insufficient as a guide to ethics in our complex society. Other notable plays of Galsworthy are *Strife*, *Justice*, and *Escape*.

During the past quarter century major contributors to English drama have included J. B. Priestley; W. Somerset Maugham, who is better known today as a novelist; Noel Coward; and most recently, Christopher Fry. Priestley is the dramatist of middle-class English

Christopher Fry

life. Among his plays are *The Good Companions*, which first appeared as a novel, *Laburnum Grove*, *People at Sea*, *Time and the Conways*, and *I Have Been Here Before*. Maugham, who is probably best known for his great novel, *Of Human Bondage*, first won fame with satiric, highly polished comedies, among them *A Man of Honor*, *Caesar's Wife*, *The Circle*, *The Constant Wife*, *The Sacred Flame*. One of his short stories, "Miss Thompson," was dramatized under the title *Rain* by John Colton and Randolph Clemence. Coward is noted for his sophisticated society plays and musical comedies, though he has also written serious interpretations of English life such as *The Vortex* and *Cavalcade*. Most popular of his comedies have been *Private Lives* and *Blithe Spirit*. Fry has found inspira-

tion in Elizabethan drama, and his plays are written in blank verse and are characterized by ornate imagery and archaic language. Among his plays are *The Boy with the Cart*, *The Lady's Not for Burning*, *Venus Observed*, *A Sleep of Prisoners*, and *The Dark Is Light Enough*.

Although Shakespeare remains the high-water mark in English drama, the theater has maintained a healthy development from *Everyman* to *The Dark Is Light Enough*. Because of the theater's need to satisfy audiences, drama has always responded quickly to the tempers of the age. More than any other form of literature, drama is the recorder of social history. No one can claim to know English life or literature who has not studied English drama.

John Gielgud and Gwen Ffrangcon-Davies as Macbeth and Lady Macbeth in a recent London production of the play.



WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE



*This Shadow is renowned Shakespear's; 'Soule of th' age
The applause' delight' the wonder of the Stage;
Nature her selfe, was proud of his designer
And joy'd to weare the dressing of his lines,
The learned will Confesse, his works are such,
As neither man nor Muse, can prayse to much.
For ever live thy fame, the world to tell,
Thy like, no age, shall ever paralell.*
W. M. sculpsit.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE was born in Stratford-upon-Avon in 1564, the oldest son of John and Mary Shakespeare. His father was a well-to-do glove-maker and was prominent in public affairs. He held a variety of offices and in time became high bailiff, or mayor. Mary Shakespeare came from the prosperous landed family of Robert Arden.

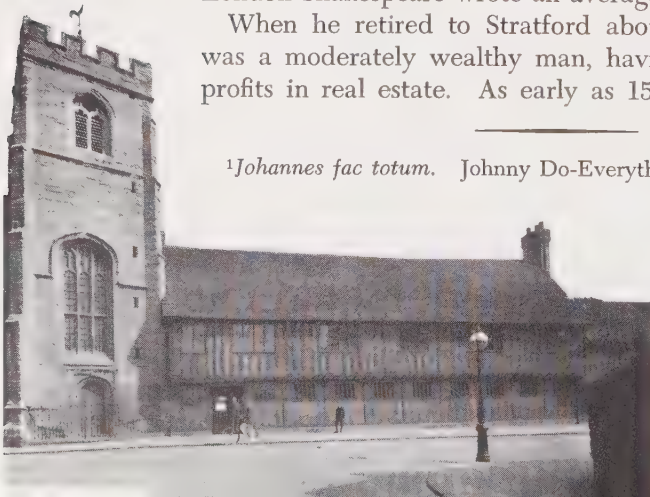
William attended the Stratford grammar school, the grammar taught there being Latin. Since one or two groups of players were licensed to perform in Stratford each year, it may be assumed that William became acquainted with the theater early in life.

In 1582 William married Anne Hathaway, from the nearby village of Shottery. They had three children, Susanna, and twins Hamnet and Judith. About 1588 Shakespeare went to London, probably in search of greater opportunities than the little town of Stratford had to offer. He may have joined a company of actors as an apprentice. He must have begun writing plays very soon, for what was probably his first play, *The Comedy of Errors*, was produced about 1589. In 1592 Robert Greene, himself a second-rate dramatist, was writing of Shakespeare as an "upstart crow, beautified with our feathers, that, with his tiger's heart wrapped in a player's hide, supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blank verse as the best of you; and being an absolute *Johannes fac totum*,¹ is in his own conceit the only Shakespeare in a country."

In 1594 Shakespeare joined the Lord Chamberlain's company, the ranking dramatic group in London. Five years later he became a partner in the new Globe Theater, and in 1609, when his company took over the Blackfriars Theater, he became a part owner of it. During his years in London Shakespeare wrote an average of two plays a year.

When he retired to Stratford about 1610, Shakespeare was a moderately wealthy man, having invested his play profits in real estate. As early as 1597 he had been able

¹*Johannes fac totum.* Johnny Do-Everything.



to buy New Place, the largest house in Stratford. There he lived the life of a country gentleman until his death. He died April 23, 1616, probably not unexpectedly, as his will is dated March 25 of the same year.

Shakespeare was buried under the floor of the chancel in the Stratford church, though there were some in London who thought he should have been buried in Westminster Abbey. There could be no question of moving the body, however, for the black marble slab in the church floor carried an epitaph which the playwright himself had composed:

*Good friend, for Jesus' sake forbear
To dig the dust enclosed here.
Blest be the man that spares these stones
And curst be he that moves my bones.*

The first collected edition of Shakespeare's work, now a famous and valued collector's item, was published in 1623. It contains fourteen comedies, ten histories, and twelve tragedies. With the addition of the comedy, *Pericles*, in the 1664 edition, this group forms the total of generally accepted Shakespeare plays, thirty-seven in all.

The most famous of Shakespeare's plays are *Romeo and Juliet*, 1593; *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 1594; *Julius Caesar*, 1599; *As You Like It*, 1600; *Hamlet*, 1602; *Othello*, 1604; *King Lear*, 1605; and *Macbeth*, 1606. Although these dates are the generally accepted ones, most of them have not been established exactly.

Shakespeare's plays were highly popular in his own day and often repeated. Among fellow writers and actors Shakespeare was much admired. Ben Jonson, who was second only to Shakespeare as a dramatist, said of him, "He was not of an age, but for all time." When Shakespeare's colleagues John Heminges and Henry Condell gathered his plays together for the First Folio, they did it "without ambition either of self-profit or fame; only to keep the memory of so worthy a friend and fellow alive as was our Shakespeare."



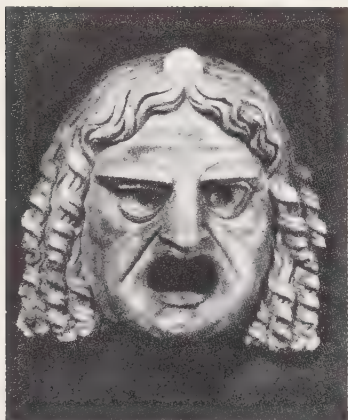
His t



His home



MACBETH



THE SHORTEST of Shakespeare's tragedies, *Macbeth* ranks among his three or four greatest plays, and some critics consider it his best. The poetry is nearly equal to that in the much longer *Hamlet*, and the dramatic construction is superior. By 1606, the probable date of *Macbeth*, Shakespeare had written at least twenty-seven plays and was recognized as the leading playwright of his day.

Having explored other human passions in other plays, Shakespeare in *Macbeth* delved into the passion of ambition. As his chief character he created a man of weak moral nature but of vivid imagination and almost poetic sensibility. Capable of ruthless plans for getting ahead in the world, when it comes to the "sticking-place," Macbeth falters and hesitates. He sees "ghosts" both literally and figuratively. When he finally succumbs, it is to a retribution he has raised up against himself.

As a fit wife for Macbeth Shakespeare created a woman strong in the very qualities her husband lacks. Although masculine in her aggressiveness and in her pride, Lady Macbeth is at the same time wholly feminine in her devotion to her husband's interests. Priding herself on her lack of sentiment, she nevertheless reveals a spark of humanity when she declares she would have killed Duncan had he not resembled her father as he slept.

When Lady Macbeth realizes that her husband does not have it in him to be the great king she had sought to make him, her spirit collapses in sudden, completely feminine surrender. More fearful than his wife in the beginning, once embarked upon his career of crime, Macbeth rapidly becomes ruthless.

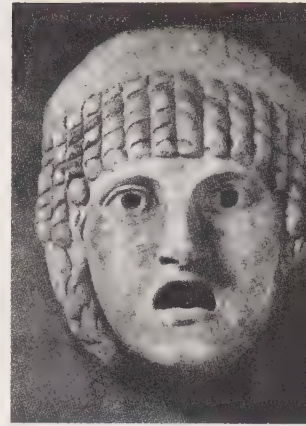
The turning point in the development of these two characters follows hard upon the turning point in the plot, the failure of Macbeth's henchmen to kill Fleance. Lady Macbeth holds the initiative through the banquet scene which follows, but from then on Macbeth becomes the dominant force. Realizing long before he admits it that he is on the downward road, Macbeth develops a strength his wife had failed to find in him when their fortunes were in the ascendancy. Near the end we cannot but admire Macbeth's courage when he says, "Lay on, Macduff," though he knows it will be his last fight.

The witches in the play symbolize the powers of evil called forth by the evil in Macbeth's heart. Shakespeare himself probably did not think of the witches as symbols but as real creatures, for it seems likely that he, like most

men of his day, really believed in ghosts and witches. That they are so obviously symbols to us can be explained by the fact that life itself is full of symbols, and Shakespeare was a master at depicting life.

In assaying the bloodiness of *Macbeth*, we must keep in mind that Shakespeare was writing for his own theater-going public, not for posterity. The Elizabethans loved violence, and in *Macbeth* Shakespeare gave them seven murders or killings—on stage, not behind the scenes as in Greek plays. The tragedy of *Macbeth*, however, is not in the deaths of the main characters but in the terrifying deterioration of character of two once-noble people.

Macbeth is drawn from Holinshed's *Chronicles*. The historical facts are that as a commander for Duncan I of Scotland, Macbeth turned against his king and killed him in 1040. Macbeth ruled ably until he was defeated in 1054 by Duncan's son Malcolm, aided by Siward of Northumberland. In 1057 Malcolm killed Macbeth and took over the throne as Malcolm III. According to Holinshed Macbeth's reign was characterized by "worthy doings and princely acts." Out of these facts and Holinshed's unemotional account of the many murders, Shakespeare created one of the great dramas of English literature. It is not the plot, but the language and mood, both of which are Shakespeare's, that make *Macbeth* the powerful tragedy that it is.



Dramatis Personae

DUNCAN, king of Scotland

MALCOLM } his sons
DONALBAIN }

MACBETH } generals of the
BANQUO } king's army

MACDUFF }
LENNOX }
ROSS }
MENTEITH }
ANGUS }
CAITHNESS }

LADY MACBETH

LADY MACDUFF

Gentlewoman attending on Lady Macbeth

HECATE

Three witches

FLEANCE, son to Banquo

SIWARD, Earl of Northumberland, general of the English forces

Young SIWARD, his son

SEYTON, an officer attending on Macbeth

BOY, son to Macduff

An English Doctor

A Scotch Doctor

A Sergeant

A Porter

An Old Man

Apparitions

Lords, Gentlemen, Officers, Soldiers, Murderers, Attendants, and Messengers

SCENE. Scotland; England.

Macbeth

ACT I

SCENE I. *A desert place.*

[*Thunder and lightning. Enter three Witches.*]



FIRST WITCH. When shall we three meet again
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

SECOND WITCH. When the hurly-burly's done,
When the battle's lost and won.

THIRD WITCH. That will be ere the set of sun.

FIRST WITCH. Where the place?

SECOND WITCH. Upon the heath.

THIRD WITCH. There to meet with Macbeth.

FIRST WITCH. I come, Graymalkin!¹

SECOND WITCH. Paddock¹ calls.

THIRD WITCH. Anon.

ALL. Fair is foul, and foul is fair:

Hover through the fog and filthy air.

[*Exeunt.*]

¹*Graymalkin.* Graymalkin and Paddock are a cat and a toad respectively. According to the superstition of the times evil spirits often took the forms of animals.

SCENE II. *A camp near Forres.*²

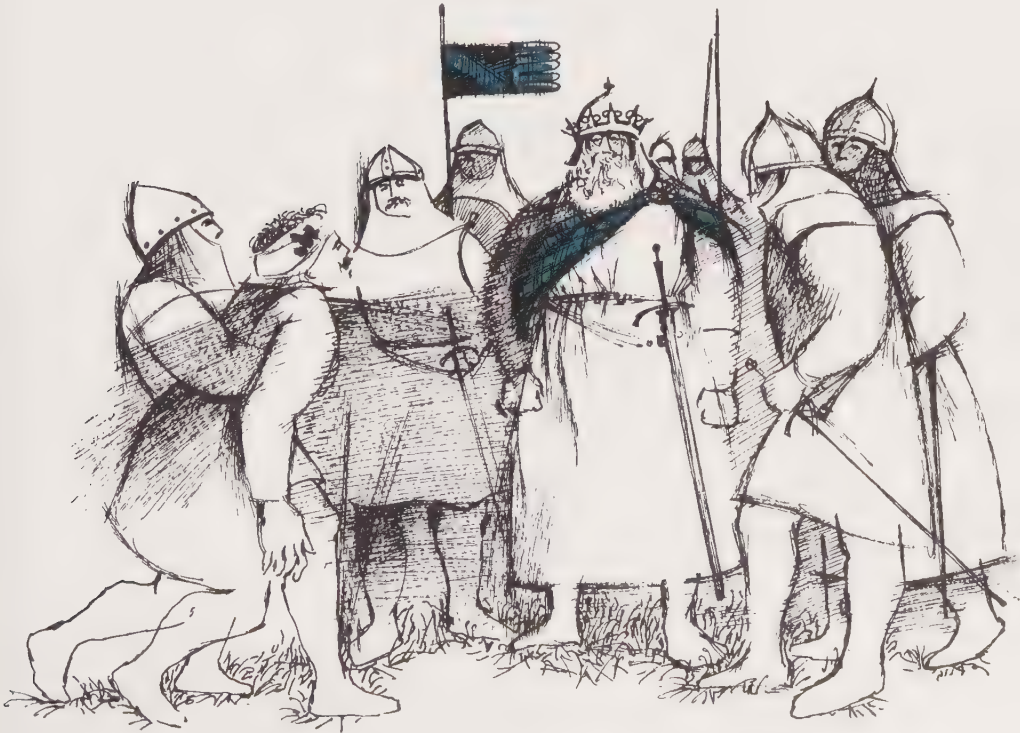
[*Alarum within. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, LENNOX, with Attendants, meeting a bleeding Sergeant.*]

DUNCAN. What bloody man is that? He can report,
As seemeth by his plight, of the revolt
The newest state.

MALCOLM. This is the sergeant
Who like a good and hardy soldier fought
'Gainst my captivity. Hail, brave friend!
Say to the king the knowledge of the broil
As thou didst leave it.

SERGEANT. Doubtful it stood,
As two spent swimmers, that do cling together
And choke their art. The merciless Macdonwald—
Worthy to be a rebel, for to that

²*Forres.* A town in northeast Scotland.



The multiplying villainies of nature
 Do swarm upon him—from the western isles
 Of kerns and gallowglasses³ is supplied;
 And fortune, on his damnèd quarrel smiling,
 Showed like a rebel's wench. But all's too weak;
 For brave Macbeth—well he deserves that name—
 Disdaining fortune, with his brandished steel,
 Which smoked with bloody execution,
 Like valor's minion carvèd out his passage
 Till he faced the slave;
 Which ne'er shook hands, nor bade farewell to him,
 Till he unseamed him from the nave to the chaps,
 And fixed his head upon our battlements.

DUNCAN. O valiant cousin! worthy gentleman!

SERGEANT. As whence the sun 'gins his reflection
 Shipwrecking storms and direful thunders break,
 So from that spring whence comfort seemed to come
 Discomfort swells. Mark, king of Scotland, mark:
 No sooner justice had with valor armed
 Compelled these skipping kerns to trust their heels,
 But the Norweyan lord,⁴ surveying vantage,
 With furbished arms and new supplies of men
 Began a fresh assault.

DUNCAN. Dismayed not this
 Our captains, Macbeth and Banquo?

SERGEANT. Yes;
 As sparrows eagles, or the hare the lion.
 If I say sooth, I must report they were
 As cannons overcharged with double cracks, so they
 Doubly redoubled strokes upon the foe
 Except they meant to bathe in reeking wounds,
 Or memorize another Golgotha,⁵
 I cannot tell.
 But I am faint, my gashes cry for help.

³*kerns and gallowglasses.* Foot soldiers, light- and heavy-armed respectively.

⁴*Norweyan lord.* King Sweno of Norway had invaded Scotland.

⁵*another Golgotha.* Golgotha, "the place of skulls," was the hill on which Christ was crucified.

DUNCAN. So well thy words become thee as thy wounds;
 They smack of honor both. Go get him surgeons.
[Exit Sergeant, attended.]
 Who comes here?

[Enter ROSS.]

MALCOLM. The worthy thane⁶ of Ross.

LENNOX. What haste looks through his eyes! So should he look
 That seems to speak things strange.

ROSS. God save the king!

DUNCAN. Whence camest thou, worthy thane?

ROSS. From Fife,⁷ great king;

Where the Norwegian banners flout the sky
 And fan our people cold. Norway himself,
 With terrible numbers,
 Assisted by that most disloyal traitor,
 The thane of Cawdor, began a dismal conflict;
 Till that Bellona's bridegroom,⁸ lapped in proof,⁹
 Confronted him with self-comparisons,
 Point against point, rebellious arm 'gainst arm,
 Curbing his lavish spirit; and, to conclude,
 The victory fell on us.

DUNCAN. Great happiness!

ROSS. That now

Sweno, the Norway's king, craves composition¹⁰;
 Nor would we deign him burial of his men
 Till he disbursed at Saint Colme's Inch
 Ten thousand dollars to our general use.

DUNCAN. No more that thane of Cawdor shall deceive
 Our bosom interest. Go pronounce his present death,
 And with his former title greet Macbeth.

ROSS. I'll see it done.

DUNCAN. What he hath lost, noble Macbeth hath won. [Exeunt.]

⁶*thane*. A Scottish title of nobility, corresponding to the English baron.

⁷*Fife*. Area of eastern Scotland south of Forres.

⁸*Bellona's bridegroom*. Since Bellona was the Roman goddess of war, Ross is calling Macbeth the god of war.

⁹*lapped in proof*. Armored in tested steel.

¹⁰*composition*. Terms of peace.

SCENE III. *A heath near Forres.*

[*Thunder. Enter the three Witches.*]

FIRST WITCH. Where hast thou been, sister?

SECOND WITCH. Killing swine.

THIRD WITCH. Sister, where thou?

FIRST WITCH. A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her lap,
And munched, and munched, and munched. "Give me!"
quoth I.

"Aroint thee, witch!" the rump-fed ronyon cries.
Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master o' the *Tiger*;
But in a sieve I'll thither sail,
And, like a rat without a tail,
I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do.

SECOND WITCH. I'll give thee a wind.

FIRST WITCH. Thou 'rt kind.

THIRD WITCH. And I another.

FIRST WITCH. I myself have all the other,
And the very ports they blow,
All the quarters that they know
I' the shipman's card.
I'll drain him dry as hay.
Sleep shall neither night nor day
Hang upon his penthouse lid;
He shall live a man forbid.
Weary se'nnights nine times nine
Shall he dwindle, peak, and pine;
Though his bark cannot be lost,
Yet it shall be tempest-tost.
Look what I have.

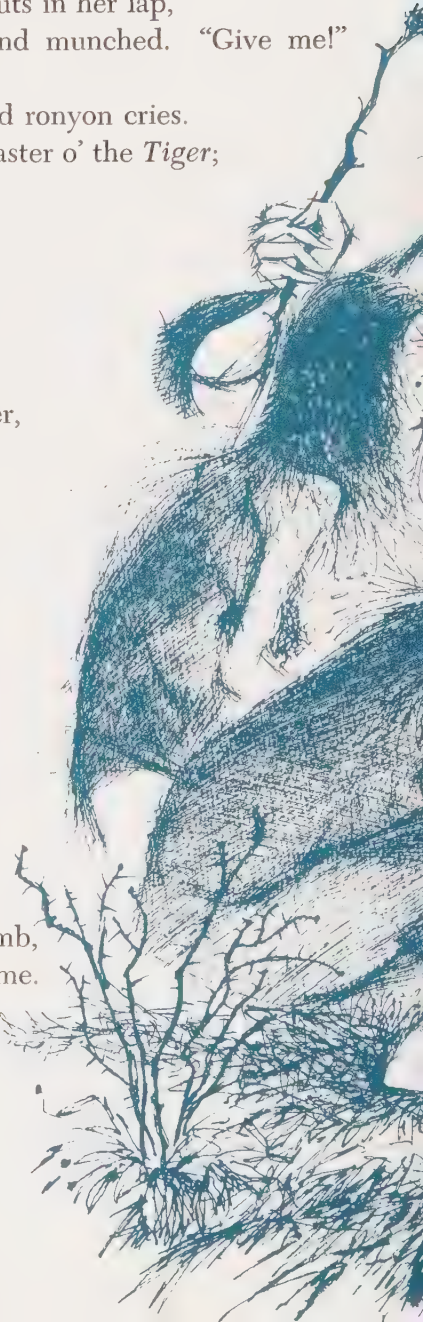
SECOND WITCH. Show me, show me.

FIRST WITCH. Here I have a pilot's thumb,
Wrecked as homeward he did come.

[*Drum within.*]

THIRD WITCH. A drum, a drum!
Macbeth doth come.

ALL. The weird sisters, hand in hand,
Posters of the sea and land,



Thus do go about, about;
 Thrice to thine and thrice to mine
 And thrice again, to make up nine.
 Peace! the charm's wound up.

[*Enter MACBETH and BANQUO.*]

MACBETH. So foul and fair a day I have not seen.

BANQUO. How far is 't called to Forres? What are these
 So withered and so wild in their attire,
 That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth,
 And yet are on 't? Live you? or are you aught
 That man may question? You seem to understand me,
 By each at once her choppy finger laying
 Upon her skinny lips. You should be women,
 And yet your beards forbid me to interpret
 That you are so.

MACBETH. Speak, if you can. What are you?

FIRST WITCH. All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of Glamis!

SECOND WITCH. All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of Cawdor!

THIRD WITCH. All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be king hereafter!



BANQUO. Good sir, why do you start, and seem to fear
 Things that do sound so fair? I' the name of truth,
 Are ye fantastical, or that indeed
 Which outwardly ye show? My noble partner
 You greet with present grace and great prediction
 Of noble having and of royal hope,
 That he seems rapt withal; to me you speak not.
 If you can look into the seeds of time,
 And say which grain will grow and which will not,
 Speak then to me, who neither beg nor fear
 Your favors nor your hate.

FIRST WITCH. Hail!

SECOND WITCH. Hail!

THIRD WITCH. Hail!

FIRST WITCH. Lesser than Macbeth, and greater.

SECOND WITCH. Not so happy, yet much happier.

THIRD WITCH. Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none;
 So all hail, Macbeth and Banquo!

FIRST WITCH. Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!

MACBETH. Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me more.
 By Sinel's death¹¹ I know I amthane of Glamis;
 But how of Cawdor? The thane of Cawdor lives,
 A prosperous gentleman; and to be king
 Stands not within the prospect of belief
 No more than to be Cawdor. Say from whence
 You owe this strange intelligence, or why
 Upon this blasted heath you stop our way
 With such prophetic greeting? Speak, I charge you.

[Witches *vanish*.]

BANQUO. The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,
 And these are of them. Whither are they vanished?

MACBETH. Into the air; and what seemed corporal melted
 As breath into the wind. Would they had stayed!

BANQUO. Were such things here as we do speak about,
 Or have we eaten of the insane root
 That takes the reason prisoner?

¹¹*Sinel's death.* Sinel was Macbeth's father, from whom he inherited the title and property of Glamis.

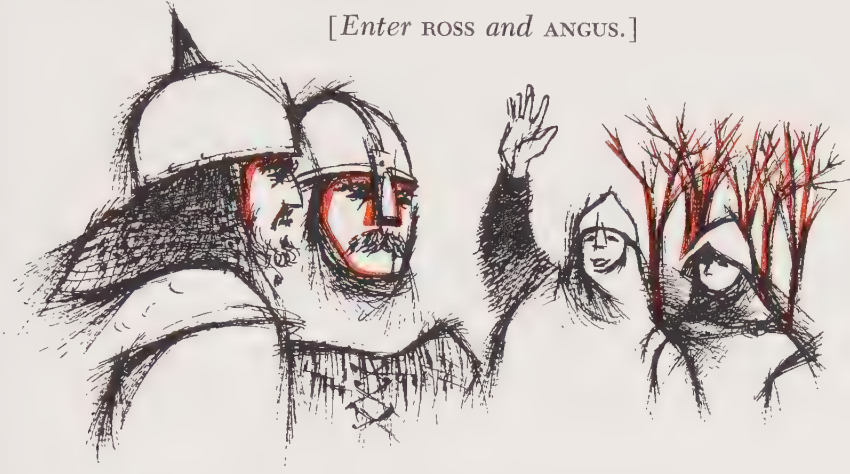
MACBETH. Your children shall be kings.

BANQUO. You shall be king.

MACBETH. And thane of Cawdor, too; went it not so?

BANQUO. To the selfsame tune and words. Who's here?

[Enter ROSS and ANGUS.]



ROSS. The king hath happily received, Macbeth,
The news of thy success; and when he reads
Thy personal venture in the rebels' fight,
His wonders and his praises do contend
Which should be thine or his. Silenced with that,
In viewing o'er the rest o' the selfsame day,
He finds thee in the stout Norweyan ranks,
Nothing afeard of what thyself didst make,
Strange images of death. As thick as hail
Came post with post; and everyone did bear
Thy praises in his kingdom's great defense,
And poured them down before him.

ANGUS. We are sent
To give thee from our royal master thanks;
Only to herald thee into his sight,
Not pay thee.

ROSS. And, for an earnest of a greater honor,
He bade me, from him, call thee thane of Cawdor;
In which addition, hail, most worthy thane!
For it is thine.

BANQUO [*Aside*]. What, can the devil speak true?

MACBETH. The thane of Cawdor lives; why do you dress me
In borrowed robes?

ANGUS. Who was the thane lives yet;
But under heavy judgment bears that life
Which he deserves to lose. Whether he was combined
With those of Norway, or did line the rebel
With hidden help and vantage, or that with both
He labored in his country's wreck, I know not;
But treasons capital, confessed and proved,
Have overthrown him.

MACBETH [*Aside*]. Glamis, and thane of Cawdor!
The greatest is behind. [*To ROSS and ANGUS*] Thanks for
your pains.
[*To BANQUO*] Do you not hope your children shall be kings,
When those that gave the thane of Cawdor to me
Promised no less to them?

BANQUO. That trusted home
Might yet enkindle you unto the crown,
Besides the thane of Cawdor. But 'tis strange;
And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,
The instruments of darkness tell us truths,
Win us with honest trifles, to betray 's
In deepest consequence.
Cousins, a word, I pray you.



MACBETH [*Aside*]. Two truths are told,
 As happy prologues to the swelling act
 Of the imperial theme.—I thank you, gentlemen.
 [*Aside*] This supernatural soliciting
 Cannot be ill, cannot be good. If ill,
 Why hath it given me earnest of success,
 Commencing in a truth? I'm thane of Cawdor.
 If good, why do I yield to that suggestion
 Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair
 And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,
 Against the use of nature? Present fears
 Are less than horrible imaginings.
 My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,
 Shakes so my single state of man that function
 Is smothered in surmise, and nothing is
 But what is not.

BANQUO. Look, how our partner's rapt.

MACBETH [*Aside*]. If chance will have me king, why, chance may
 crown me,
 Without my stir.

BANQUO. New honors come upon him,
 Like our strange garments, cleave not to their mold
 But with the aid of use.

MACBETH [*Aside*]. Come what come may,
 Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.

BANQUO. Worthy Macbeth, we stay upon your leisure.

MACBETH. Give me your favor.¹² My dull brain was wrought
 With things forgotten. Kind gentlemen, your pains
 Are registered where every day I turn
 The leaf to read them. Let us toward the king.
 [*To BANQUO*] Think upon what hath chanced, and, at more
 time,
 The interim having weighed it, let us speak
 Our free hearts each to other.

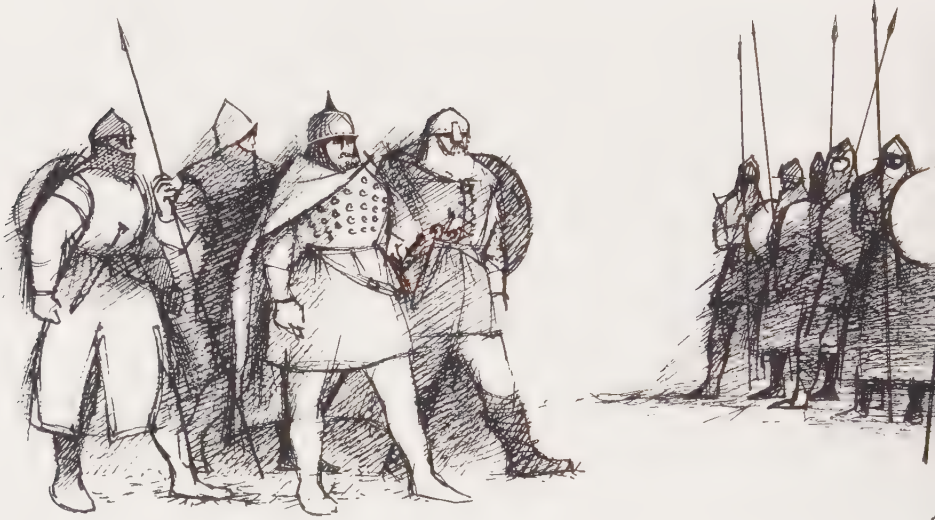
BANQUO. Very gladly.

MACBETH. Till then, enough. Come, friends. [*Exeunt.*]

¹²Give me your favor. I beg your pardon.

SCENE IV. *Forres. The palace.*

[*Flourish. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, LENNOX, and Attendants.*]



DUNCAN. Is execution done on Cawdor? Are not
Those in commission yet returned?

MALCOLM. My liege,
They are not yet come back. But I have spoke
With one that saw him die; who did report
That very frankly he confessed his treasons,
Implored your highness' pardon and set forth
A deep repentance. Nothing in his life
Became him like the leaving it; he died
As one that had been studied in his death
To throw away the dearest thing he owed,
As 'twere a careless trifle.

DUNCAN. There's no art
To find the mind's construction in the face;
He was a gentleman on whom I built
An absolute trust.

[*Enter MACBETH, BANQUO, ROSS, and ANGUS.*]

O worthiest cousin!
The sin of my ingratitude even now
Was heavy on me. Thou art so far before



That swiftest wing of recompense is slow
To overtake thee. Would thou hadst less deserved,
That the proportion both of thanks and payment
Might have been mine! Only I have left to say,
More is thy due than more than all can pay.

MACBETH. The service and the loyalty I owe,
In doing it, pays itself. Your highness' part
Is to receive our duties; and our duties
Are to your throne and state children and servants,
Which do but what they should, by doing everything
Safe toward your love and honor.

DUNCAN. Welcome hither;
I have begun to plant thee, and will labor
To make thee full of growing. Noble Banquo,
That hast no less deserved, nor must be known
No less to have done so, let me infold thee
And hold thee to my heart.

BANQUO. There if I grow,
The harvest is your own.

DUNCAN.

My plenteous joys,
 Wanton in fullness, seek to hide themselves
 In drops of sorrow. Sons, kinsmen, thanes,
 And you whose places are the nearest, know
 We will establish our estate upon
 Our eldest, Malcolm, whom we name hereafter
 The Prince of Cumberland,¹³ which honor must
 Not unaccompanied invest him only,
 But signs of nobleness, like stars, shall shine
 On all deservers. From hence to Inverness,¹⁴
 And bind us further to you.

MACBETH. The rest is labor, which is not used for you.
 I'll be myself the harbinger and make joyful
 The hearing of my wife with your approach;
 So humbly take my leave.

DUNCAN.

My worthy Cawdor!

MACBETH: [Aside]. The Prince of Cumberland! That is a step
 On which I must fall down, or else o'erleap,
 For in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires;
 Let not light see my black and deep desires;
 The eye wink at the hand; yet let that be
 Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see. [Exit.]

DUNCAN. True, worthy Banquo; he is full so valiant,
 And in his commendations I am fed;
 It is a banquet to me. Let's after him,
 Whose care is gone before to bid us welcome.
 It is a peerless kinsman. [Flourish. Exeunt.]

¹³Prince of Cumberland. A title traditionally conferred on the heir to the Scottish throne.

¹⁴Inverness. Northwest Scotland, where Macbeth's castle was located.



SCENE V. *Inverness.* MACBETH'S castle.

[*Enter* LADY MACBETH, *reading a letter.*]



LADY MACBETH. *"They met me in the day of success; and I have learned by the perfectest report, they have more in them than mortal knowledge. When I burned in desire to question them further, they made themselves air, into which they vanished. Whiles I stood rapt in the wonder of it, came missives from the king, who all-hailed me 'Thane of Cawdor'; by which title, before, these weird sisters saluted me, and referred me to the coming on of time, with 'Hail, king that shalt be!' This have I thought good to deliver thee, my dearest partner of greatness, that thou mightst not lose the dues of rejoicing, by being ignorant of what greatness is promised thee. Lay it to thy heart, and farewell."*

Glamis thou are, and Cawdor; and shalt be
What thou art promised. Yet do I fear thy nature;
It is too full o' the milk of human kindness
To catch the nearest way. Thou wouldst be great;
Art not without ambition, but without
The illness should attend it. What thou wouldst highly
That wouldst thou holily; wouldst not play false,

And yet wouldst wrongly win. Thou 'ldst have, great Glamis,
That which cries, "Thus thou must do, if thou have it";
And that which rather thou dost fear to do
Than wishest should be undone. Hie thee hither,
That I may pour my spirits in thine ear,
And chastise with the valor of my tongue
All that impedes thee from the golden round,
Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem
To have thee crowned withal.

[*Enter a Messenger.*]

What is your tidings?

MESSENGER. The king comes here tonight.

LADY MACBETH.

Thou 'rt mad to say it!

Is not thy master with him? who, were 't so,
Would have informed for preparation.

MESSENGER. So please you, it is true; our thane is coming.

One of my fellows had the speed of him,
Who, almost dead for breath, had scarcely more
Than would make up his message.

LADY MACBETH.

Give him tending;

He brings great news.

[*Exit Messenger.*]

The raven himself is hoarse

That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
Under my battlements. Come, you spirits
That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,
And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full
Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood;
Stop up the access and passage to remorse,



That no compunctious visitings of nature
 Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
 The effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts,
 And take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers,
 Wherever in your sightless substances
 You wait on nature's mischief! Come, thick night,
 And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
 That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
 Nor Heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,
 To cry "Hold, hold!"

[Enter MACBETH.]

Great Glamis! worthy Cawdor!
 Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter!
 Thy letters have transported me beyond
 This ignorant present, and I feel now
 The future in the instant.

MACBETH. My dearest love,
 Duncan comes here tonight.

LADY MACBETH. And when goes hence?

MACBETH. Tomorrow, as he purposes.

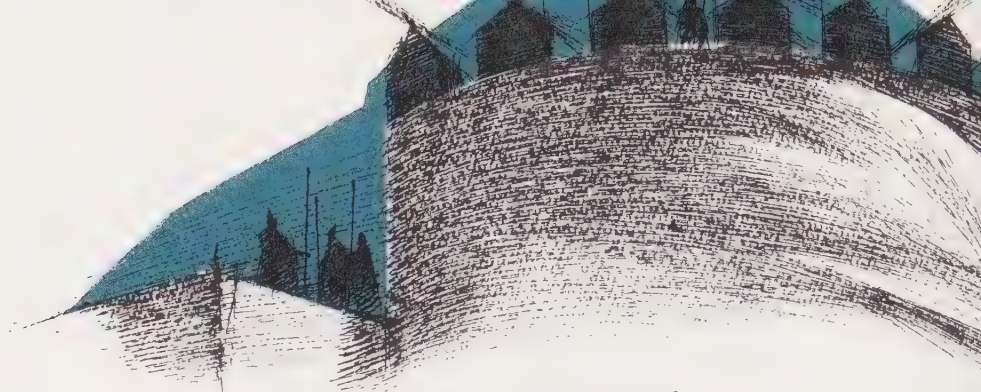
LADY MACBETH. O, never
 Shall sun that morrow see!
 Your face, my thane, is as a book where men
 May read strange matters. To beguile the time,
 Look like the time; bear welcome in your eye,
 Your hand, your tongue; look like the innocent flower,
 But be the serpent under 't. He that's coming
 Must be provided for; and you shall put
 This night's great business into my dispatch,
 Which shall to all our nights and days to come
 Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom.

MACBETH. We will speak further.

LADY MACBETH. Only look up clear;
 To alter favor¹⁵ ever is to fear.
 Leave all the rest to me.

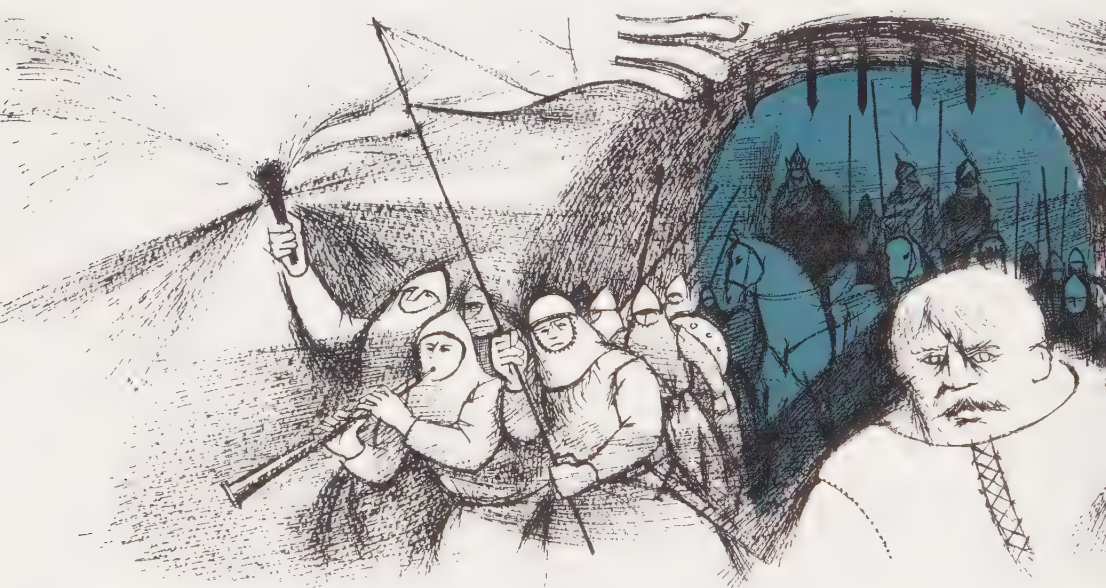
[Exeunt.]

¹⁵*alter favor.* Change expression. As Lady Macbeth has already said, she is afraid her husband's face will give away his thoughts.



SCENE VI. *Before MACBETH'S castle.*

[*Hautboys*¹⁶ and torches. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, BANQUO, LENNOX, MACDUFF, ROSS, ANGUS, and Attendants.]



DUNCAN. This castle hath a pleasant seat; the air
Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself
Unto our gentle senses.

BANQUO. This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting martlet,¹⁷ does approve,

¹⁶*Hautboys*. Oboes.

¹⁷*martlet*. The swallow. The abundance of swallows' nests leads Duncan to conclude that the air is healthful here.

By his loved mansionry, that the heaven's breath
 Smells wooingly here; no jutting, frieze,
 Buttress, nor coign of vantage, but this bird
 Hath made his pendent bed and procreant cradle.
 Where they most breed and haunt, I have observed,
 The air is delicate.

[Enter LADY MACBETH.]

DUNCAN. See, see, our honored hostess!
 The love that follows us sometime is our trouble,
 Which still we thank as love. Herein I teach you
 How you shall bid God 'ild us for your pains,
 And thank us for your trouble.¹⁸

LADY MACBETH. All our service
 In every point twice done and then done double
 Were poor and single business to contend
 Against those honors deep and broad wherewith
 Your majesty loads our house; for those of old,
 And the late dignities heaped up to them,
 We rest your hermits.¹⁹

DUNCAN. Where's the thane of Cawdor?
 We coursed him at the heels, and had a purpose
 To be his purveyor; but he rides well;
 And his great love, sharp as his spur, hath holp him
 To his home before us. Fair and noble hostess,
 We are your guest tonight.

LADY MACBETH. Your servants ever
 Have theirs, themselves, and what is theirs in compt,
 To make their audit at your highness' pleasure,
 Still to return your own.

DUNCAN. Give me your hand;
 Conduct me to mine host. We love him highly,
 And shall continue our graces toward him.
 By your leave, hostess. [Exeunt.]

¹⁸*And thank us for your trouble.* Duncan means that Lady Macbeth should be grateful for the trouble his visit causes because his presence shows his approval of her husband. Shakespeare's audiences would have thought at once of Queen Elizabeth's visits to her nobles, which sometimes bankrupted them.

¹⁹*We rest your hermits.* We will pray for you. Hermits were then usually religious men.

SCENE VII. *Within MACBETH'S castle.*

[*Hautboys and torches. Enter a Sewer,²⁰ and divers Servants with dishes and service, over the stage. Then enter MACBETH.*]



MACBETH. If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly. If the assassination
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch
With his surcease success; that but this blow
Might be the be-all and the end-all here,
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,
We'd jump the life to come. But in these cases
We still have judgment here, that we but teach
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
To plague the inventor. This even-handed justice
Commends the ingredients of our poisoned chalice
To our own lips. He's here in double trust:
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,
Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,
Who should against his murderer shut the door,
Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan
Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
So clear in his great office, that his virtues
Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against
The deep damnation of his taking-off;
And pity like a naked new-born babe
Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubin horsed
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,

²⁰Sewer. Butler.

That tears shall drown the wind. I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself
And falls on th' other—

[Enter LADY MACBETH.]

How now! what news?

LADY MACBETH. He has almost supped. Why have you left the
chamber?

MACBETH. Hath he asked for me?

LADY MACBETH. Know you not he has?

MACBETH. We will proceed no further in this business.
He hath honored me of late; and I have bought
Golden opinions from all sorts of people,
Which would be worn now in their newest gloss,
Not cast aside so soon.

LADY MACBETH. Was the hope drunk
Wherein you dressed yourself? Hath it slept since?
And wakes it now, to look so green and pale
At what it did so freely? From this time
Such I account thy love. Art thou afraid



To be the same in thine own act and valor
As thou art in desire? Wouldst thou have that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem,
Letting "I dare not" wait upon "I would,"
Like the poor cat i' the adage?²¹

MACBETH. Prithee, peace!

I dare do all that may become a man;
Who dares do more is none.

LADY MACBETH.

What beast was ’t, then,
That made you break this enterprise to me?
When you durst do it, then you were a man;
And, to be more than what you were, you would
Be so much more the man. Nor time nor place
Did then adhere,²² and yet you would make both.
They have made themselves, and that their fitness now
Does unmake you. I have given suck, and know
How tender ’tis to love the babe that milks me;
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have plucked my nipple from his boneless gums,
And dashed the brains out, had I so sworn as you
Have done to this.

MACBETH. If we should fail?

LADY MACBETH. We fail!

But screw your courage to the sticking-place,
And we'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep—
Whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey
Soundly invite him—his two chamberlains
Will I with wine and wassail so convince
That memory, the warder of the brain,
Shall be a fume, and the receipt of reason
A limbeck only. When in swinish sleep
Their drenchèd natures lie as in a death,

²¹*adage*. An old proverb says, "The cat would eat fish but would not wet her feet."

²²*Nor time nor place did then adhere.* They had apparently plotted Duncan's murder previously, before the present opportunity so unexpectedly presented itself. Some scholars think such a discussion may have taken place in a scene which has not been preserved.

What cannot you and I perform upon
The unguarded Duncan? what not put upon
His spongy officers, who shall bear the guilt
Of our great quell?

MACBETH. Bring forth men-children only;
For thy undaunted mettle should compose
Nothing but males. Will it not be received,
When we have marked with blood those sleepy two
Of his own chamber and used their very daggers,
That they have done 't?

LADY MACBETH. Who dares receive it other,
As we shall make our griefs and clamor roar
Upon his death?

MACBETH. I am settled, and bend up
Each corporal agent to this terrible feat.
Away, and mock the time with fairest show;
False face must hide what the false heart doth know.

[*Exeunt.*]



Discussion

1. What information does Scene I give us? What mood does it establish?
2. What is the meaning of "Fair is foul, and foul is fair"?
3. What does Scene II tell us about Macbeth?
4. What significance does Duncan's last speech in Scene II have for Scene III?

5. What is Macbeth's attitude toward the witches? Why is he startled by their predictions?
6. What effect does Ross' announcement have upon Macbeth?
7. What two courses are open to Macbeth for obtaining the throne? Which course does he decide upon?
8. Note Duncan's second speech in Scene IV. What quality necessary to a king, or to any executive, does Duncan lack?
9. Recall Macbeth's resolution upon leaving the witches. What new development causes him to change his mind?
10. What do Lady Macbeth's comments reveal about the character of her husband?
11. Quote lines which might indicate that Lady Macbeth is not naturally evil but is forcing herself to make evil plans?
12. In what ways is Scene VI a contrast to Scene V?
13. Why does Lady Macbeth alone welcome the king? Note that she does not answer the king's question about her husband.
14. What does Macbeth mean by saying "If it were done when 'tis done"?
15. Is Macbeth more afraid of punishment in this life or in the hereafter?
16. What decision has Macbeth reached when his wife enters in Scene VII?
17. What decision has he reached by the end of the scene? What prompted him to change his mind?
18. By the end of the act what is your attitude toward each of the three main characters? Do you want Macbeth to gain the throne?
19. Point out evidence that Macbeth thinks in images rather than in words.
20. Quote lines to show that Macbeth is influenced from within, from without, and from above.

Research

The introduction to the play pointed out some similarities and differences between Holinshed's *Chronicles* and Shakespeare's play. You might find it interesting to pursue this investigation further. G. B. Harrison's *Shakespeare: Major Plays* quotes extensively from Holinshed. Your librarian will help you find other sources.

SCENE I. *Within MACBETH's castle.*

[*Enter BANQUO, and FLEANCE with a torch before him.*]



BANQUO. How goes the night, boy?

FLEANCE. The moon is down; I have not heard the clock.

BANQUO. And she goes down at twelve.

FLEANCE. I take 't, 'tis later, sir.

BANQUO. Hold, take my sword. There's husbandry¹ in heaven;
 Their candles are all out. Take thee that, too.²
 A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,
 And yet I would not sleep. Merciful powers,
 Restrain in me the cursèd thoughts that nature
 Gives way to in repose!

[*Enter MACBETH, and a Servant with a torch.*]

Give me my sword.

Who's there?

MACBETH. A friend.

BANQUO. What, sir, not yet at rest? The king's abed.
 He hath been in unusual pleasure, and
 Sent forth great largess to your offices.

¹*husbandry.* Careful management; thrift.

²*Take thee that, too.* Perhaps he hands his son a dagger. Fleance apparently is standing duty of some sort, and his father wants him to be well armed against danger.

This diamond he greets your wife withal,
By the name of most kind hostess; and shut up
In measureless content.

MACBETH. Being unprepared,
Our will became the servant to defect;
Which else should free have wrought.

BANQUO. All's well.
I dreamt last night of the three weird sisters:
To you they have showed some truth.

MACBETH. I think not of them;
Yet, when we can entreat an hour to serve,
We would spend it in some words upon that business,
If you would grant the time.

BANQUO. At your kind'st leisure.

MACBETH. If you shall cleave to my consent, when 'tis,
It shall make honor for you.

BANQUO. So I lose none
In seeking to augment it, but still keep
My bosom franchised and allegiance clear,
I shall be counseled.

MACBETH. Good repose the while!

BANQUO. Thanks, sir; the like to you!

[*Exeunt BANQUO and FLEANCE.*]

MACBETH. Go bid thy mistress, when my drink is ready,
She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed. [*Exit Servant.*]
Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee.
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
To feeling as to sight? Or art thou but
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?
I see thee yet, in form as palpable
As this which now I draw.
Thou marshal'st me the way that I was going,
And such an instrument I was to use.
Mine eyes are made the fools o' the other senses,
Or else worth all the rest. I see thee still,



And on thy blade and dudgeon³ gouts of blood,
Which was not so before. There's no such thing.
It is the bloody business which informs
Thus to mine eyes. Now o'er the one half world
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse
The curtained sleep. Witchcraft celebrates
Pale Hecate's⁴ offerings, and withered murder,
Alarumed by his sentinel, the wolf,
Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,
With Tarquin's⁵ ravishing strides, towards his design
Moves like a ghost. Thou sure and firm-set earth,
Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
Thy very stones prate of my whereabouts,
And take the present horror from the time,
Which now suits with it. Whiles I threat, he lives:
Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.

[A bell rings.]

I go, and it is done; the bell invites me.
Hear it not, Duncan; for it is a knell
That summons thee to heaven or to hell.

[Exit.]

³*dudgeon*. Handle.

⁴*Hecate*. Goddess of magic and witchcraft.

⁵*Tarquin*. Sextus Tarquinius was a Roman ruler who was driven from the throne for ravishing Lucrece. Shakespeare had earlier written a poem on this subject.

SCENE II. *The same.*

[*Enter* LADY MACBETH.]



LADY MACBETH. That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold;

What hath quenched them hath given me fire. Hark! Peace!
It was the owl that shrieked, the fatal bellman
Which gives the stern'st good night. He is about it.
The doors are open; and the surfeited grooms
Do mock their charge with snores. I have drugged their
possets,
That death and nature do contend about them,
Whether they live or die.

MACBETH [*Within*]. Who's there? what, ho!

LADY MACBETH. Alack, I am afraid they have awaked,
And 'tis not done. The attempt and not the deed
Confounds us. Hark! I laid their daggers ready;
He could not miss 'em. Had he not resembled
My father as he slept, I had done 't.

[*Enter* MACBETH]

My husband!



MACBETH. I have done the deed. Didst thou not hear a noise?

LADY MACBETH. I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.⁶

Did not you speak?

MACBETH. When?

LADY MACBETH. Now.

MACBETH. As I descended?

LADY MACBETH. Ay.

MACBETH. Hark!

Who lies i' the second chamber?

LADY MACBETH. Donalbain.

MACBETH. This is a sorry sight. [*Looking at his hands.*]

LADY MACBETH. A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.

MACBETH. There's one did laugh in 's sleep, and one cried "Murder!"

That they did wake each other. I stood and heard them;

But they did say their prayers, and addressed them

Again to sleep.

LADY MACBETH. There are two lodged together.

⁶*the owl scream and the crickets cry.* Superstitious warnings of death.



MACBETH. One cried "God bless us!" and "Amen" the other,
As they had seen me with these hangman's hands.
Listening their fear, I could not say "Amen,"
When they did say "God bless us!"

LADY MACBETH. Consider it not so deeply.

MACBETH. But wherefore could not I pronounce "Amen"?
I had most need of blessing, and "Amen"
Stuck in my throat.

LADY MACBETH. These deeds must not be thought
After these ways; so, it will make us mad.

MACBETH. Methought I heard a voice cry "Sleep no more!
Macbeth does murder sleep," the innocent sleep,
Sleep that knits up the raveled sleeve of care,
The death of each day's life, sore labor's bath,
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,
Chief nourisher in life's feast—

LADY MACBETH. What do you mean?

MACBETH. Still it cried "Sleep no more!" to all the house;
"Glamis hath murdered sleep, and therefore Cawdor
Shall sleep no more; Macbeth shall sleep no more."

LADY MACBETH. Who was it that thus cried? Why, worthy thane,
You do unbend your noble strength, to think
So brainsickly of things. Go get some water,
And wash this filthy witness from your hand.
Why did you bring these daggers from the place?
They must lie there; go carry them; and smear
The sleepy grooms with blood.

MACBETH. I'll go no more.
I am afraid to think what I have done;
Look on 't again I dare not.



LADY MACBETH.

Infirm of purpose!

Give me the daggers. The sleeping and the dead
Are but as pictures; 'tis the eye of childhood
That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed,
I'll gild the faces of the grooms withal;
For it must seem their guilt. [*Exit. Knocking within.*]

MACBETH.

Whence is that knocking?

How is 't with me, when every noise appalls me?
What hands are here? Ha! they pluck out mine eyes.
Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
Making the green one red.

[*Re-enter LADY MACBETH.*]

LADY MACBETH.

My hands are of your color; but I shame
To wear a heart so white. [*Knocking within.*] I hear a
knocking
At the south entry. Retire we to our chamber;
A little water clears us of this deed.
How easy is it, then! Your constancy⁷
Hath left you unattended. [*Knocking within.*] Hark! more
knocking.
Get on your nightgown, lest occasion call us,
And show us to be watchers. Be not lost
So poorly in your thoughts.

MACBETH. To know my deed, 'twere best not know myself.

[*Knocking within.*]

Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou couldst!

[*Exeunt.*]

⁷constancy. Self-control.

SCENE III. *The same.*

[*Knocking within. Enter a Porter.*]



PORTER. Here's a knocking indeed! If a man were porter of hell-gate,⁸ he should have old turning the key. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock, knock! Who's there, i' the name of Beelzebub?⁹ Here's a farmer, that hanged himself on the expectation of plenty.¹⁰ Come in time; have napkins enow about you; here you'll sweat for 't. [*Knocking within.*]

⁸*porter of hell-gate.* Shakespeare's audience would have recognized this scene as a take-off on the old miracle plays.

⁹*Beelzebub.* A devil; in Milton's *Paradise Lost* Beelzebub is represented as second in command to Satan.

¹⁰*hanged himself on the expectation of plenty.* A bumper crop would bring low prices.



Knock, knock! Who's there, in the other devil's name? Faith, here's an equivocator, that could swear in both the scales against either scale; who committed treason enough for God's sake, yet could not equivocate to heaven. O, come in, equivocator. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock, knock! Who's there? Faith, here's an English tailor come hither, for stealing out of a French hose.¹¹ Come in, tailor; here you may roast your goose.¹² [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock; never at quiet! What are you? But this place is too cold for hell. I'll devil-porter it no further; I had thought to have let in some of all professions that go the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire. [*Knocking within.*] Anon, anon! I pray you, remember the porter.¹³

[*Opens the gate.*]

[*Enter MACDUFF and LENNOX.*]

MACDUFF. Was it so late, friend, ere you went to bed,
That you do lie so late?

PORTER. Faith, sir, we were carousing till the second cock; and
drink, sir, is a great provoker.

MACDUFF. I believe drink gave thee the lie last night.

PORTER. That did, sir, i' the very throat on me. But I requited
him for his lie; and, I think, being too strong for him, though
he took up my legs sometime, yet I made a shift to cast him.

MACDUFF. Is thy master stirring?

¹¹*French hose.* Tight-fitting knee breeches. The joke was based on the reputation tailors had of claiming that a garment took more cloth than it actually did; they would increase their earnings by selling the goods thus stolen. Obviously they couldn't work this trick with French hose.

¹²*goose.* A tailor's smoothing iron.

¹³*remember the porter.* He expects a tip for opening the door.

[*Enter* MACBETH.]

Our knocking has awaked him; here he comes.

LENNOX. Good morrow, noble sir.

MACBETH. Good morrow, both.

MACDUFF. Is the king stirring, worthy thane?

MACBETH. Not yet.

MACDUFF. He did command me to call timely on him.

I have almost slipped the hour.

MACBETH. I'll bring you to him.

MACDUFF. I know this is a joyful trouble to you;

But yet 'tis one.

MACBETH. The labor we delight in physics pain.

This is the door.

MACDUFF. I'll make so bold to call,

For 'tis my limited service.

[*Exit.*]

LENNOX. Goes the king hence today?

MACBETH. He does—he did appoint so.

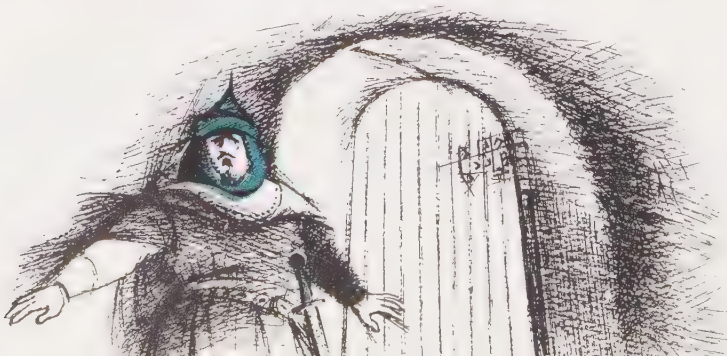
LENNOX. The night has been unruly: whereas we lay,
Our chimneys were blown down; and, as they say,
Lamentings heard i' the air; strange screams of death,
And prophesying with accents terrible
Of dire combustion and confused events
New hatched to the woeful time. The obscure bird
Clamored the livelong night; some say, the earth
Was feverous and did shake.

MACBETH. 'Twas a rough night.

LENNOX. My young remembrance cannot parallel
A fellow to it.

[*Re-enter* MACDUFF.]

MACDUFF. O horror, horror, horror! Tongue nor heart
Cannot conceive nor name thee!



MACBETH. }
 LENNOX. }

What's the matter?

MACDUFF. Confusion now hath made his masterpiece!
 Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope
 The Lord's anointed temple,¹⁴ and stole thence
 The life o' the building!

MACBETH. What is 't you say? The life?

LENNOX. Mean you his majesty?

MACDUFF. Approach the chamber, and destroy your sight
 With a new Gorgon.¹⁵ Do not bid me speak;
 See, and then speak yourselves.

[*Exeunt MACBETH and LENNOX*]

Awake, awake!

Ring the alarum bell. Murder and treason!
 Banquo and Donalbain! Malcolm! awake!
 Shake off this downy sleep, death's counterfeit,
 And look on death itself! Up, up, and see
 The great doom's image!¹⁶ Malcolm! Banquo!
 As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites,
 To countenance this horror! Ring the bell.

[*Bell rings.*]

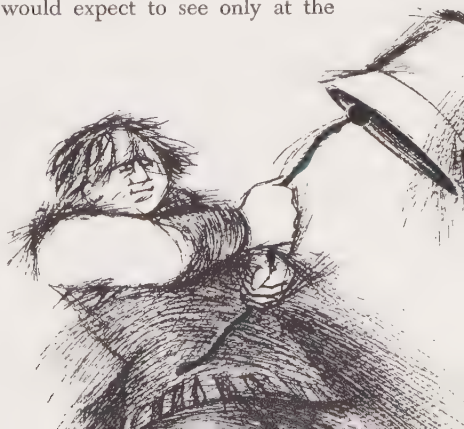
[*Enter LADY MACBETH.*]

LADY MACBETH. What's the business,
 That such a hideous trumpet calls to parley
 The sleepers of the house? Speak, speak!

¹⁴*The Lord's anointed temple.* Upon coronation a king was anointed with holy oil as a symbol that he was authorized by God to rule.

¹⁵*Gorgon.* The three mythological Gorgon sisters had snakes for hair and were so horrible a sight that they turned the beholder to stone.

¹⁶*great doom's image.* A scene such as one would expect to see only at the Last Judgment.





MACDUFF.

O gentle lady,

'Tis not for you to hear what I can speak;
The repetition, in a woman's ear,
Would murder as it fell.

[*Enter BANQUO.*]

O Banquo, Banquo,
Our royal master's murdered!

LADY MACBETH.

Woe, alas!

What, in our house?

BANQUO.

Too cruel anywhere.

Dear Duff, I prithee, contradict thyself,
And say it is not so.

[*Re-enter MACBETH and LENNOX, with ROSS.*]

MACBETH. Had I but died an hour before this chance,
I had lived a blessed time; for, from this instant,
There's nothing serious in mortality.
All is but toys; renown and grace is dead;
The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees
Is left this vault to brag of.



[Enter MALCOLM and DONALBAIN.]

DONALBAIN. What is amiss?

MACBETH. You are, and do not know 't.
The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood
Is stopped; the very source of it is stopped.

MACDUFF. Your royal father's murdered.

MALCOLM. O, by whom?

LENNOX. Those of his chamber, as it seemed, had done 't.
Their hands and faces were all badged with blood;
So were their daggers, which unwiped we found
Upon their pillows.
They stared, and were distracted; no man's life
Was to be trusted with them.

MACBETH. O, yet I do repent me of my fury,
That I did kill them.

MACDUFF. Wherefore did you so?

MACBETH. Who can be wise, amazed, temperate and furious,
Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man.
The expedition of my violent love
Outrun the pauser, reason. Here lay Duncan,



His silver skin laced with his golden blood,
And his gashed stabs looked like a breach in nature
For ruin's wasteful entrance; there, the murderers,
Steeped in the colors of their trade, their daggers
Unmannerly breeched with gore. Who could refrain,
That had a heart to love, and in that heart
Courage to make 's love known?

LADY MACBETH.

Help me hence, ho!

MACDUFF. Look to the lady.

MALCOLM [Aside to DONALBAIN]. Why do we hold our tongues,
That most may claim this argument for ours?

DONALBAIN [Aside to MALCOLM]. What should be spoken here,
where our fate,

Hid in an auger hole, may rush, and seize us?

Let's away;

Our tears are not yet brewed.

MALCOLM [Aside to DONALBAIN]. Nor our strong sorrow
Upon the foot of motion.

BANQUO.

Look to the lady:

[LADY MACBETH is carried out.]

And when we have our naked frailties¹⁷ hid,
That suffer in exposure, let us meet,
And question this most bloody piece of work,
To know it further. Fears and scruples shake us.
In the great hand of God I stand; and thence
Against the undivulged pretense I fight
Of treasonous malice.

MACDUFF. And so do I.

ALL. So all.

MACBETH. Let's briefly put on manly readiness,¹⁸
And meet i' the hall together.

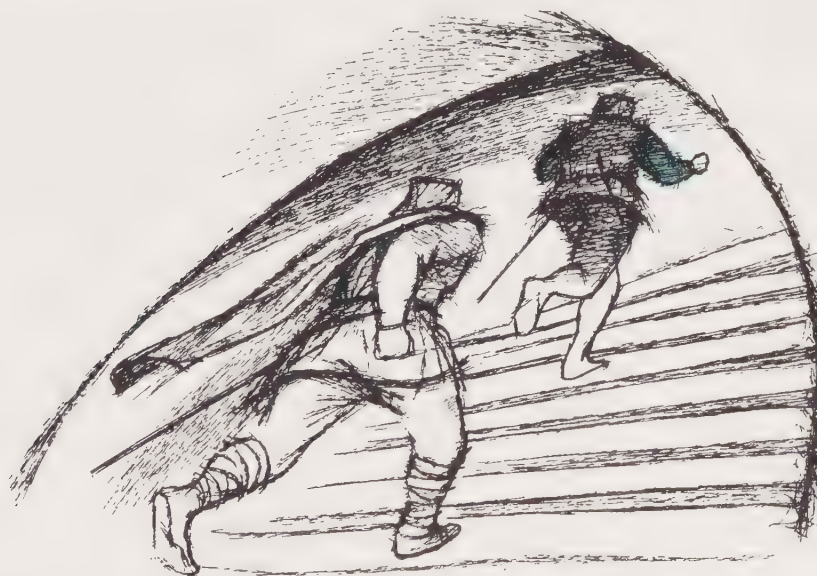
ALL. Well contented.

[*Exeunt all but MALCOLM and DONALBAIN.*]

MALCOLM. What will you do? Let's not consort with them;
To show an unfelt sorrow is an office
Which the false man does easy. I'll to England.

DONALBAIN. To Ireland, I; our separated fortune
Shall keep us both the safer. Where we are,
There's daggers in men's smiles; the near in blood,
The nearer bloody.

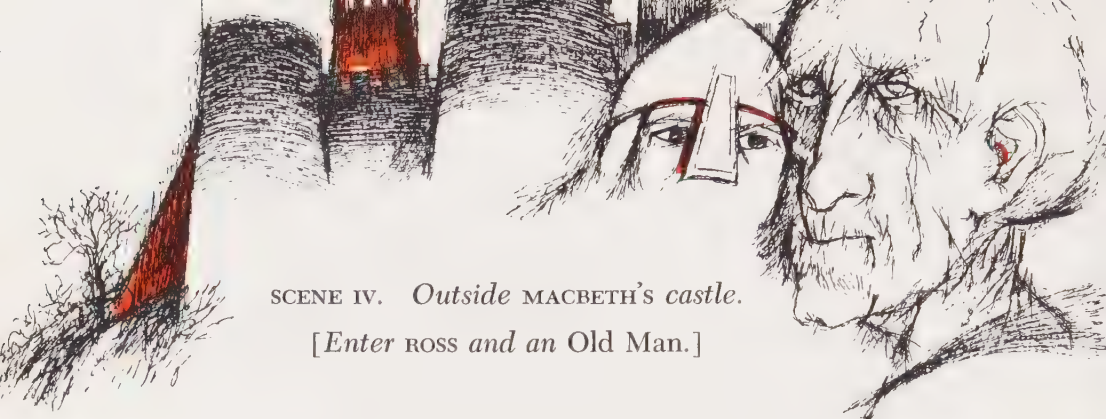
MALCOLM. This murderous shaft that's shot
Hath not yet lighted,¹⁹ and our safest way
Is to avoid the aim. Therefore, to horse;
And let us not be dainty of leave-taking,
But shift away. There's warrant in that theft.
Which steals itself, when there's no mercy left. [*Exeunt.*]



¹⁷naked frailties. They are in their night clothes.

¹⁸manly readiness. Clothes and probably armor.

¹⁹Hath not yet lighted. More murders may follow.



SCENE IV. *Outside MACBETH'S castle.*

[*Enter ROSS and an Old Man.*]

OLD MAN. Threescore and ten I can remember well;
Within the volume of which time I have seen
Hours dreadful and things strange; but this sore night
Hath trifled former knowings.

ROSS. Ah, good father,
Thou seest, the heavens, as troubled with man's act,
Threaten his bloody stage. By the clock, 'tis day,
And yet dark night strangles the traveling lamp.²⁰
Is 't night's predominance, or the day's shame;
That darkness does the face of earth entomb,
When living light should kiss it?

OLD MAN. 'Tis unnatural,
Even like the deed that's done. On Tuesday last,
A falcon, towering in her pride of place,
Was by a mousing owl hawked at and killed.

ROSS. And Duncan's horses—a thing most strange and certain—
Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race,
Turned wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out,
Contending 'gainst obedience, as they would make
War with mankind.

OLD MAN. 'Tis said they eat each other.

ROSS. They did so, to the amazement of mine eyes
That looked upon 't. Here comes the good Macduff.

[*Enter MACDUFF.*]

How goes the world, sir, now?

MACDUFF. Why, see you not?

ROSS. Is 't known who did this more than bloody deed?

²⁰*traveling lamp.* The sun.

MACDUFF. Those that Macbeth hath slain.

ROSS. Alas, the day!

What good could they pretend?

MACDUFF. They were suborned;²¹

Malcolm and Donalbain, the king's two sons,
Are stolen away and fled; which puts upon them
Suspicion of the deed.

ROSS. 'Gainst nature still!

Thrifless ambition, that will ravin up
Thine own life's means! Then 'tis most like
The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth.

MACDUFF. He is already named, and gone to Scone²²
To be invested.

ROSS. Where is Duncan's body?

MACDUFF. Carried to Colmekill,
The sacred storehouse of his predecessors,
And guardian of their bones.

ROSS. Will you to Scone?

MACDUFF. No, cousin, I'll to Fife.²³

ROSS. Well, I will thither.

MACDUFF. Well, may you see things well done²⁴ there. Adieu!
Lest our old robes sit easier than our new!

ROSS. Farewell, father.

OLD MAN. God's benison go with you; and with those
That would make good of bad, and friends of foes!

[*Exeunt.*]

²¹*suborned*. Bribed.

²²*Scone*. Scone was the royal residence of Scottish kings from 1157 to 1488. The Stone of Scone, or Coronation Stone, is now in Westminster Abbey in London.

²³*Fife*. Macduff's castle was in Fife.

²⁴*things well done*. Macduff is sarcastic. He suspects Macbeth.

Discussion

1. Explain the time relationship between the last scene of Act I and the first scene of Act II.
2. What do you think Banquo's "cursed thoughts" are?
3. What is the hint in Macbeth's remarks to Banquo? Do you think Banquo catches it?

4. What is the significance of the dagger scene? How does Macbeth explain the vision to himself?
5. What does the first line of Scene II tell us about the character of Lady Macbeth?
6. Why did not Lady Macbeth commit the murder herself? Add this clue to her character to the one given in line 1.
7. Why was Macbeth unable to say “Amen”? How does his wife handle the situation? Do you think she is as calm as she appears?
8. What is the significance of the “sleep” speech?
9. What mistake of Macbeth’s is corrected by his wife?
10. Do you think Macbeth is sincere in his last speech in Scene II?
11. Why do you think Shakespeare opened Scene III with the clowning of the porter? Is humor appropriate in a tragedy?
12. How good is Macbeth at acting?
13. What reason does Macbeth give for killing the grooms? Was this his real reason? Was the killing of the grooms part of the original plot? Was it a wise move?
14. Did Lady Macbeth really faint? Was the timing fortunate or unfortunate?
15. Quote the lines in which Banquo seals his own fate.
16. Why do Malcolm and Donalbain decide to flee? Quote a line from each that indicates they do not believe the grooms killed their father.
17. Do you think the flight of Duncan’s sons is an advantage or a disadvantage to Macbeth?
18. What purpose does Scene IV serve? Why is the Old Man introduced into the play?
19. How do the attitudes of Ross and Macduff toward Macbeth differ?
20. What hints are there in Act II that Macbeth’s reign may not run smoothly?

Research

If the Porter scene puzzles you, as it has done many readers, you will want to read De Quincey’s essay on page 256. Whether you agree with De Quincey or not, his essay will help you clarify your own thinking. The last paragraph of the essay may help you to greater appreciation of *Macbeth*.

ACT III

SCENE I. *Forres. The palace.*

[*Enter BANQUO.*]



BANQUO. Thou hast it now: king, Cawdor, Glamis, all,
As the weird women promised, and I fear
Thou play'dst most foully for 't: yet it was said
It should not stand in thy posterity,
But that myself should be the root and father
Of many kings. If there come truth from them—
As upon thee, Macbeth, their speeches shine—
Why, by the verities on thee made good,
May they not be my oracles as well,
And set me up in hope? But hush! No more.

[*Sennet sounded.*¹ *Enter MACBETH, as king, LADY MACBETH, as queen, LENNOX, ROSS, Lords, Ladies, and Attendants.*]

MACBETH. Here's our chief guest.

LADY MACBETH. If he had been forgotten,
It had been as a gap in our great feast.
And all-thing unbecoming.

MACBETH. Tonight we hold a solemn supper, sir,
And I'll request your presence.

¹*Sennet sounded.* A trumpet call to announce the entrance or departure of important people.



BANQUO.

Let your highness

Command upon me; to the which my duties
Are with a most indissoluble tie
Forever knit.

MACBETH. Ride you this afternoon?

BANQUO. Aye, my good lord.

MACBETH. We should have else desired your good advice,
Which still hath been both grave and prosperous,
In this day's council; but we'll take tomorrow.
Is 't far you ride?

BANQUO. As far, my lord, as will fill up the time
'Twixt this and supper. Go not my horse the better,
I must become a borrower of the night
For a dark hour or twain.

MACBETH.

Fail not our feast.

BANQUO. My lord, I will not.

MACBETH. We hear our bloody cousins are bestowed
In England and in Ireland, not confessing
Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers
With strange invention. But of that tomorrow,
When therewithal we shall have cause of state
Craving us jointly. Hie you to horse; adieu,
Till you return at night. Goes Fleance with you?

BANQUO. Aye, my good lord. Our time does call upon 's.

MACBETH. I wish your horses swift and sure of foot;

And so I do commend you to their backs.

Farewell.

[*Exit BANQUO.*]

Let every man be master of his time

Till seven at night. To make society

The sweeter welcome, we will keep ourself

Till suppertime alone; while then, God be with you!

[*Exeunt all but MACBETH and an Attendant.*]

Sirrah, a word with you. Attend those men

Our pleasure?

ATTENDANT. They are, my lord, without the palace gate.

MACBETH. Bring them before us. [*Exit Attendant.*]

To be thus is nothing;

But to be safely thus. Our fears in Banquo

Stick deep; and in his royalty of nature

Reigns that which would be feared. 'Tis much he dares;

And, to that dauntless temper of his mind,

He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valor

To act in safety. There is none but he

Whose being I do fear; and, under him,

My genius is rebuked, as, it is said,

Mark Antony's was by Caesar. He chid the sisters

When first they put the name of king upon me,

And bade them speak to him; then prophetlike

They hailed him father to a line of kings.

Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown,

And put a barren scepter in my gripe,

Thence to be wrenched with an unlineal hand,

No son² of mine succeeding. If 't be so,

For Banquo's issue have I filed³ my mind;

For them the gracious Duncan have I murdered;

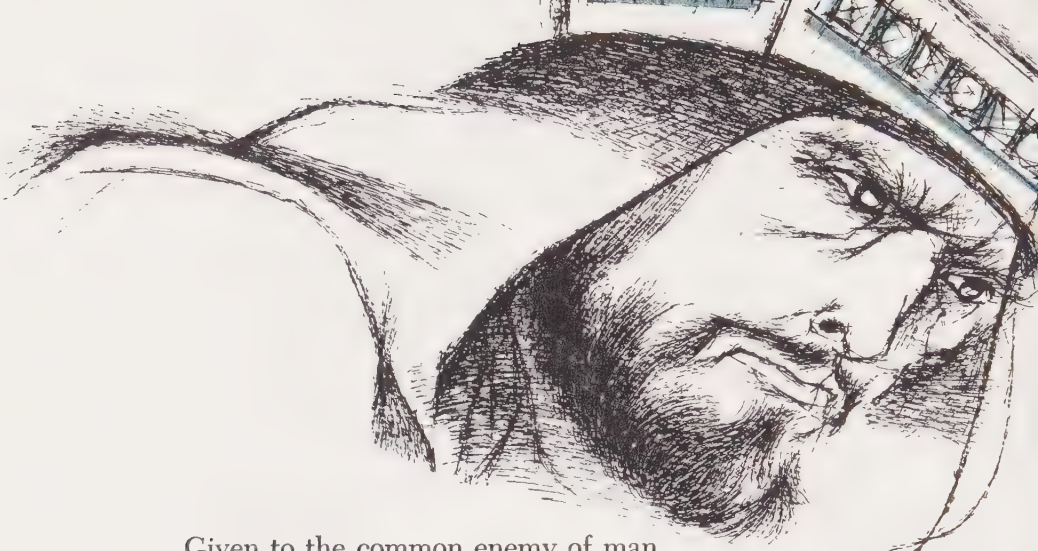
Put rancors in the vessel of my peace

Only for them; and mine eternal jewel⁴

²No son. The child Lady Macbeth referred to earlier was hers by a previous marriage.

³filed. Defiled.

⁴eternal jewel. His soul.



Given to the common enemy of man,
To make them kings, the seed of Banquo kings!
Rather than so, come fate into the list,
And champion me to the utterance⁵! Who's there?

[*Re-enter Attendant, with two Murderers.*]

Now go to the door, and stay there till we call.

[*Exit Attendant.*]

Was it not yesterday we spoke together?

FIRST MURDERER. It was, so please your highness.

MACBETH.

Well then, now

Have you considered of my speeches? Know
That it was he in the times past which held you
So under fortune, which you thought had been
Our innocent self. This I made good to you
In our last conference, passed in probation with you,
How you were borne in hand, how crossed, the instruments,
Who wrought with them, and all things else that might
To half a soul and to a notion crazed
Say "Thus did Banquo."

FIRST MURDERER.

You made it known to us.

MACBETH. I did so, and went further, which is now

Our point of second meeting. Do you find
Your patience so predominant in your nature
That you can let this go? Are you so gospelled

⁵*to the utterance.* To the uttermost, or to death.

To pray for this good man and for his issue,
Whose heavy hand hath bowed you to the grave
And beggared yours for ever?

FIRST MURDERER.

We are men, my liege.

MACBETH. Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men;

As hounds and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs,
Shoughs, water rugs, and demiwolves are clept
All by the name of dogs; the valued file
Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,
The housekeeper, the hunter, every one
According to the gift which bounteous nature
Hath in him closed, whereby he does receive
Particular addition, from the bill
That writes them all alike; and so of men.
Now, if you have a station in the file,
Not i' the worst rank of manhood, say 't;
And I will put that business in your bosoms,
Whose execution takes your enemy off,
Grapples you to the heart and love of us,
Who wear our health but sickly in his life,
Which in his death were perfect.

SECOND MURDERER.

I am one, my liege,

Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world
Have so incensed that I am reckless what
I do to spite the world.

FIRST MURDERER.

And I another

So weary with disasters, tugged with fortune,
That I would set my life on any chance,
To mend it, or be rid on 't.



MACBETH.

Both of you

Know Banquo was your enemy.

BOTH MURDERERS.

True, my lord.

MACBETH. So is he mine; and in such bloody distance,
 That every minute of his being thrusts
 Against my near'st of life; and though I could
 With barefaced power sweep him from my sight
 And bid my will avouch it, yet I must not,
 For certain friends that are both his and mine,
 Whose loves I may not drop, but wail his fall
 Who I myself struck down; and thence it is,
 That I to your assistance do make love,
 Masking the business from the common eye
 For sundry weighty reasons.

SECOND MURDERER.

We shall, my lord,

Perform what you command us.

FIRST MURDERER.

Though our lives—

MACBETH. Your spirits shine through you. Within this hour at most
 I will advise you where to plant yourselves;
 Acquaint you with the perfect spy o' the time,
 The moment on 't; for 't must be done tonight,
 And something from the palace; always thought
 That I require a clearness⁶; and with him—
 To leave no rubs nor botches in the work—
 Fleance his son, that keeps him company,
 Whose absence is no less material to me
 Than is his father's, must embrace the fate
 Of that dark hour. Resolve yourselves apart;
 I'll come to you anon.

BOTH MURDERERS.

We are resolved, my lord.

MACBETH. I'll call upon you straight. Abide within.

[*Exeunt Murderers.*]

It is concluded. Banquo, thy soul's flight,
 If it find heaven, must find it out tonight.

[*Exit.*]

⁶*always thought that I require a clearness.* Remember that I must be kept clear of suspicion.

SCENE II. *The palace.*

[*Enter* LADY MACBETH *and a* Servant.]

LADY MACBETH. Is Banquo gone from court?

SERVANT. Aye, madam, but returns again tonight.

LADY MACBETH. Say to the king, I would attend his leisure
For a few words.

SERVANT. Madam, I will. [Exit.]

LADY MACBETH. Naught's had, all's spent,
Where our desire is got without content.
'Tis safer to be that which we destroy
Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.

[*Enter* MACBETH.]

How now, my lord! why do you keep alone,
Of sorriest fancies your companions making,
Using those thoughts which should indeed have died
With them they think on? Things without all remedy
Should be without regard; what's done is done.

MACBETH. We have scotched the snake, not killed it;
She'll close and be herself, whilst our poor malice
Remains in danger of her former tooth.
But let the frame of things disjoint, both the worlds suffer,
Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep
In the affliction of these terrible dreams
That shake us nightly. Better be with the dead,
Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace,
Than on the torture of the mind to lie
In restless ecstasy. Duncan is in his grave;
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well;
Treason has done his worst; nor steel, nor poison,
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing,
Can touch him further.

LADY MACBETH. Come on;
Gentle my lord, sleek o'er your rugged looks;
Be bright and jovial among your guests tonight.

MACBETH. So shall I, love; and so, I pray, be you.



Let your remembrance apply to Banquo;
Present him eminence,⁷ both with eye and tongue;
Unsafe the while, that we
Must lave our honors in these flattering streams,
And make our faces vizards to our hearts,
Disguising what they are.

LADY MACBETH. You must leave this.

MACBETH. O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!
Thou know'st that Banquo, and his Fleance, lives.

LADY MACBETH. But in them nature's copy's not eterne.

MACBETH. There's comfort yet; they are assailable;
Then be thou jocund; ere the bat hath flown
His cloistered flight, ere to black Hecate's summons
The shard-borne beetle with his drowsy hums
Hath rung night's yawning peal, there shall be done
A deed of dreadful note.

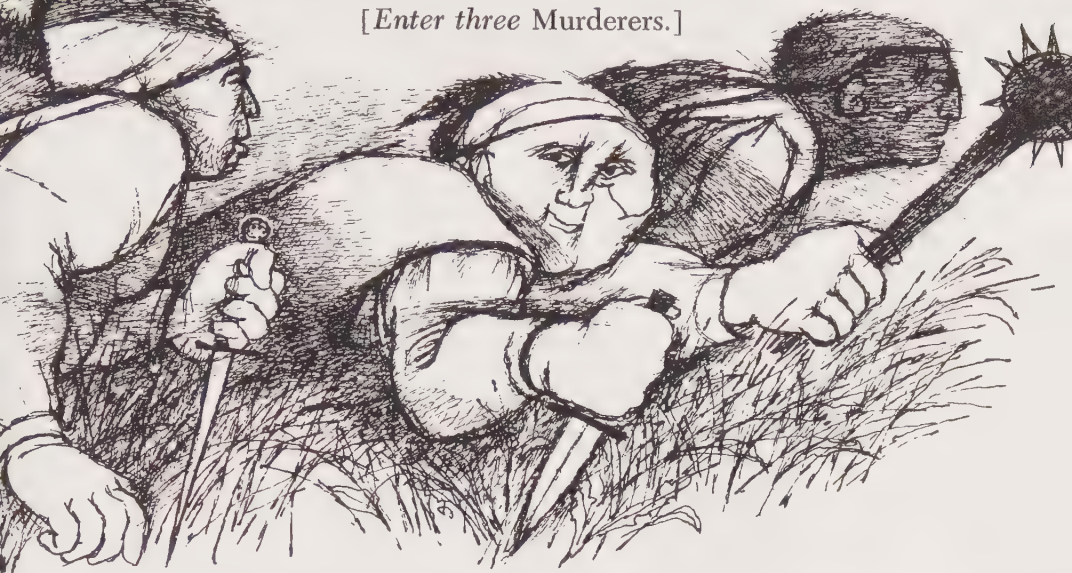
LADY MACBETH. What's to be done?

MACBETH. Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,
Till thou applaud the deed. Come, seeling night,
Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day;
And with thy bloody and invisible hand
Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond
Which keeps me pale! Light thickens, and the crow
Makes wing to the rooky wood;
Good things of day begin to droop and drowse,
Whiles night's black agents to their preys do rouse.
Thou marvel'st at my words, but hold thee still;
Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill.
So, prithee, go with me. [Exeunt.]

⁷*Present him eminence.* Show him (Banquo) high regard. The remark is intentionally misleading; Macbeth does not want his wife to suspect his plan to murder Banquo.

SCENE III. *A park near the palace.*

[*Enter three Murderers.*]



FIRST MURDERER. But who did bid thee join with us?

THIRD MURDERER. Macbeth.

SECOND MURDERER. He needs not our mistrust, since he delivers
Our offices and what we have to do
To the direction just.

FIRST MURDERER. Then stand with us;
The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day.
Now spurs the lated traveler apace
To gain the timely inn; and near approaches
The subject of our watch.

THIRD MURDERER. Hark! I hear horses.

BANQUO [*Within*]. Give us a light there, ho!

SECOND MURDERER. Then 'tis he; the rest
That are within the note of expectation^s
Already are i' the court.

FIRST MURDERER. His horses go about.

THIRD MURDERER. Almost a mile; but he does usually,
So all men do, from hence to the palace gate
Make it their walk.

^s*within the note of expectation.* The others on the guest list have already arrived.

[Enter BANQUO, and FLEANCE with a torch.]

SECOND MURDERER.

A light, a light!

THIRD MURDERER.

'Tis he.

FIRST MURDERER. Stand to 't.

BANQUO. It will be rain tonight.

FIRST MURDERER.

Let it come down.

[They set upon BANQUO.]



BANQUO. O treachery! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly!

Thou mayst revenge. O slave! [Dies. FLEANCE escapes.]

THIRD MURDERER. Who did strike out the light?

FIRST MURDERER.

Was 't not the way?

THIRD MURDERER. There's but one down; the son is fled.

SECOND MURDERER.

We have lost

Best half of our affair.

FIRST MURDERER. Well, let's away, and say how much is done.

[Exeunt.]



SCENE IV. *The same. Hall in the palace.*

[*A banquet prepared. Enter MACBETH, LADY MACBETH, ROSS, LENNOX, Lords, and Attendants.*]

MACBETH. You know your own degrees; sit down. At first
And last the hearty welcome.

LORDS. Thanks to your majesty.

MACBETH. Ourselves will mingle with society,
And play the humble host.
Our hostess keeps her state, but in best time
We will require her welcome.

LADY MACBETH. Pronounce it for me, sir, to all our friends;
For my heart speaks they are welcome.

[*First Murderer appears at the door.*]

MACBETH. See, they encounter thee with their hearts' thanks.
Both sides are even; here I'll sit i' the midst;
Be large in mirth; anon we'll drink a measure
The table round. [*Approaching the door.*] There's blood
upon thy face.

MURDERER. 'Tis Banquo's then.

MACBETH. 'Tis better thee without than he within.
Is he dispatched?

MURDERER. My lord, his throat is cut; that I did for him.

MACBETH. Thou art the best o' the cutthroats: yet he's good
That did the like for Fleance. If thou didst it,
Thou art the nonpareil.

MURDERER. Most royal sir,
Fleance is 'scaped.

MACBETH. Then comes my fit again. I had else been perfect,
Whole as the marble, founded as the rock,
As broad and general as the casing air;
But now I am cabined, cribbed, confined, bound in
To saucy doubts and fears. But Banquo's safe?

MURDERER. Ay, my good lord; safe in a ditch he bides,
With twenty trenched gashes on his head,
The least a death to nature.

MACBETH. Thanks for that;
There the grown serpent lies; the worm that's fled

LENNOX. Here, my good lord. What is 't that moves your highness?

MACBETH. Which of you have done this?

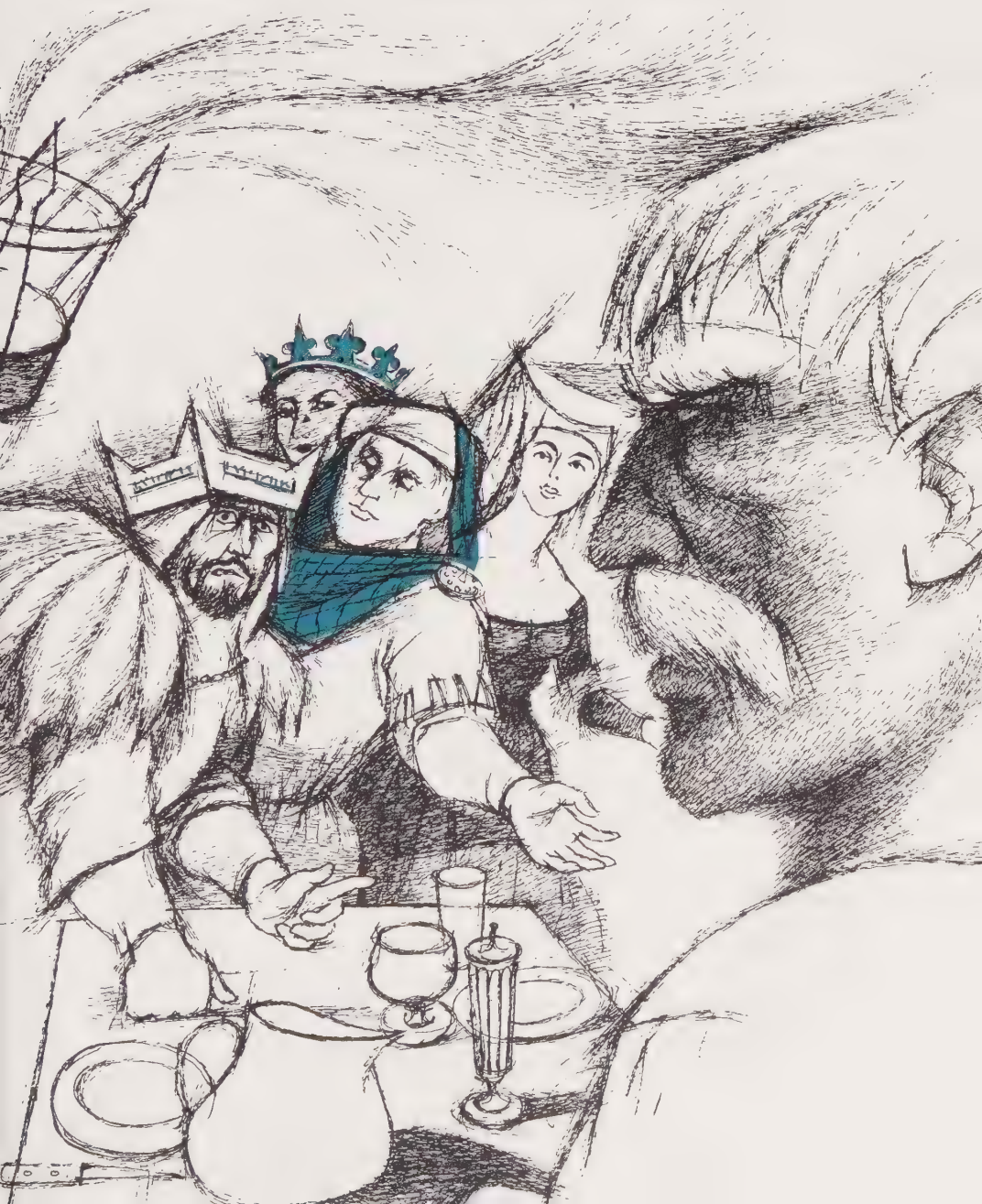
LORDS. What, my good lord?

MACBETH. Thou canst not say I did it; never shake

Thy gory locks at me.

ROSS. Gentlemen, rise; his highness is not well.

LADY MACBETH. Sit, worthy friends; my lord is often thus,



And hath been from his youth. Pray you, keep seat;
 The fit is momentary; upon a thought
 He will again be well. If much you note him,
 You shall offend him and extend his passion.

Feed, and regard him not. [*To MACBETH.*] Are you a man?

MACBETH. Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that
 Which might appall the devil.

LADY MACBETH. O proper stuff!

This is the very painting of your fear;
 This is the air-drawn dagger which, you said,
 Led you to Duncan. O, these flaws and starts,
 Impostors to true fear, would well become
 A woman's story at a winter's fire,
 Authorized by her grandam. Shame itself!
 Why do you make such faces? When all's done,
 You look but on a stool.

MACBETH. Prithee, see there! behold! look! lo! how say you?

Why, what care I? If you canst nod, speak too.
 If charnel houses and our graves must send
 Those that we bury back, our monuments
 Shall be the maws of kites.¹¹

[*Ghost vanishes.*]

LADY MACBETH. What, quite unmanned in folly?

MACBETH. If I stand here, I saw him.

LADY MACBETH. Fie, for shame!

MACBETH. Blood hath been shed ere now, i' the olden time,
 Ere humane statute purged the gentle weal;
 Ay, and since too, murders have been performed
 Too terrible for the ear. The time has been,
 That, when the brains were out, the man would die,
 And there an end; but now they rise again,
 With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,¹²
 And push us from our stools. This is more strange
 Than such a murder is.

LADY MACBETH. My worthy lord,
 Your noble friends do lack you.

¹¹*our monuments shall be the maws of kites.* If the dead can return from their graves, it would be better if we let vultures devour them.

¹²*twenty mortal murders on their crowns.* Twenty fatal wounds on their heads.

MACBETH.

I do forget.

Do not muse at me, my most worthy friends;
 I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing
 To those that know me. Come, love and health to all;
 Then I'll sit down. Give me some wine; fill full.
 I drink to the general joy o' the whole table,
 And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss;
 Would he were here! To all and him we thirst,
 And all to all.

LORDS.

Our duties, and the pledge.

[*Re-enter Ghost.*]

MACBETH. Avaunt! And quit my sight! Let the earth hide thee!

Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold;
 Thou hast no speculation in those eyes
 Which thou dost glare with!

LADY MACBETH.

Think of this, good peers,

But as a thing of custom; 'tis no other;
 Only it spoils the pleasure of the time.

MACBETH. What man dare, I dare.

Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,
 The armed rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan¹³ tiger;
 Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves
 Shall never tremble; or be alive again,
 And dare me to the desert with thy sword;
 If trembling I inhabit then, protest me
 The baby of a girl. Hence, horrible shadow!
 Unreal mockery, hence!

[*Ghost vanishes.*]

Why, so; being gone,

I am a man again. Pray you, sit still.

LADY MACBETH. You have displaced the mirth, broke the good meeting,

With most admired disorder.

MACBETH.

Can such things be,

And overcome us like a summer's cloud,
 Without our special wonder? You make me strange
 Even to the disposition that I owe,

¹³*Hyrcan.* Hyrcania, a country in Asia, where the fiercest tigers roamed.

SCENE V. *A heath.*

[*Thunder. Enter the three Witches, meeting HECATE.*]



FIRST WITCH. Why, how now, Hecate! You look angrily.

HECATE. Have I not reason, beldams as you are,
Saucy and overbold? How did you dare
To trade and traffic with Macbeth
In riddles and affairs of death;
And I, the mistress of your charms,
The close contriver of all harms,
Was never called to bear my part,
Or show the glory of our art?
And, which is worse, all you have done
Hath been but for a wayward son,
Spiteful and wrathful, who, as others do,
Loves for his own ends, not for you.
But make amends now; get you gone,
And at the pit of Acheron¹⁵

¹⁵*Acheron*. According to mythology a river in Hades. Here apparently the name is applied to some local pit or hole, perhaps believed to be bottomless or to lead to hell.

Meet me i' the morning; thither he
Will come to know his destiny.
Your vessels and your spells provide,
Your charms and everything beside.
I am for the air; this night I'll spend
Unto a dismal and a fatal end;
Great business must be wrought ere noon.
Upon the corner of the moon
There hangs a vaporous drop profound;
I'll catch it ere it come to ground;
And that distilled by magic sleights
Shall raise such artificial sprites
As by the strength of their illusion
Shall draw him on to his confusion.
He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear
His hopes 'bove wisdom, grace, and fear;
And you all know, security
Is mortals' chiefest enemy.

[*Music and a song within: "Come away, come away," etc.*]

Hark! I am called; my little spirit, see,

Sits in a foggy cloud, and stays for me.

[*Exit.*]

FIRST WITCH. Come, let's make haste; she'll soon be back again.

[*Exeunt.*]



SCENE VI. *Forres. The palace.*

[*Enter LENNOX and another Lord.*]



LENNOX. My former speeches have but hit your thoughts,
Which can interpret farther; only, I say,
Things have been strangely borne. The gracious Duncan
Was pitied of Macbeth; marry, he was dead:
And the right-valiant Banquo walked too late;
Whom, you may say, if 't please you, Fleance killed,¹⁶
For Fleance fled; men must not walk too late.
Who cannot want the thought, how monstrous
It was for Malcolm and for Donalbain
To kill their gracious father? Damnèd fact!
How it did grieve Macbeth! Did he not straight
In pious rage the two delinquents tear,
That were the slaves of drink and thralls of sleep?
Was not that nobly done? Aye, and wisely, too;
For 't would have angered any heart alive
To hear the men deny 't. So that, I say,
He has borne all things well; and I do think
That had he Duncan's sons under his key—
As, an 't please heaven, he shall not—they should find
What 'twere to kill a father; so should Fleance.

¹⁶*Fleance killed.* Throughout this speech Lennox is bitterly ironical.

But, peace! For from broad words,¹⁷ and cause he failed
His presence at the tyrant's feast, I hear
Macduff lives in disgrace. Sir, can you tell
Where he bestows himself?

LORD.

The son of Duncan,
From whom this tyrant holds the due of birth,
Lives in the English court, and is received
Of the most pious Edward¹⁸ with such grace
That the malevolence of fortune nothing
Takes from his high respect. Thither Macduff
Is gone to pray the holy king, upon his aid
To wake Northumberland and warlike Siward;¹⁹
That, by the help of these—with Him above
To ratify the work—we may again
Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights,
Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives,
Do faithful homage and receive free honors;
All which we pine for now: and this report
Hath so exasperate their king that he
Prepares for some attempt of war.

LENNOX.

Sent he to Macduff?

LORD.

He did; and with an absolute "Sir, not I,"
The cloudy messenger turns me his back,
And hums, as who should say, "You'll rue the time
That clogs me with this answer."

LENNOX.

And that well might
Advise him to a caution, to hold what distance
His wisdom can provide. Some holy angel
Fly to the court of England and unfold
His message ere he come, that swift blessing
May soon return to this our suffering country
Under a hand accursed!

LORD.

I'll send my prayers with him.

[*Exeunt.*]

¹⁷*broad words.* Plain speaking.

¹⁸*pious Edward.* Edward the Confessor, who was king of England from 1042 to 1066, was exceedingly gentle and pious. He built Westminster Abbey and after his death was proclaimed a saint.

¹⁹*Siward.* Siward was the Earl of Northumberland. According to Holinshed he was the father of Duncan's wife, but Shakespeare makes him her brother.

Discussion

1. What three sinister questions does Macbeth ask Banquo in Scene I? Why does Macbeth fear Banquo?
2. Do the murderers seem reluctant to carry out Macbeth's wishes? Why is Macbeth at such pains to persuade them?
3. How does Macbeth's approach to his second crime differ from his approach to his first crime? Why doesn't he kill Banquo himself?
4. Which lines keep us, at least partly, in sympathy with Macbeth?
5. What change do you note in Lady Macbeth's feelings?
6. Point out lines which indicate that Macbeth is not enjoying his kingship as much as he had expected.
7. What advice does Lady Macbeth give her husband in Scene II?
8. Is it conscience or fear that troubles Macbeth in this scene?
9. Why does he not confide his plans to his wife?
10. Some critics believe that the third murderer is Macbeth himself. What is your opinion? How does the third murderer gain the confidence of the other two?
11. What incident in Scene III marks the turning point in Macbeth's fortunes?
12. Why does Macbeth not sit down at the banquet table when his guests do?
13. Is the first or the second appearance of the ghost the more dramatic?
14. In what way is the banquet an unfortunate occurrence for Macbeth, both as far as his guests are concerned and as far as he himself is concerned?
15. Does Lady Macbeth show good judgment in her public remarks? How do her public utterances differ in tone from her private remarks to her husband?
16. How does Scene IV prepare us for Scene V? Does Lady Macbeth believe in the weird sisters?
17. Why is Hecate angry in Scene V? Would the scene be just as effective without her?
18. What does Scene VI contribute to the plot?
19. Point out remarks made by Lennox which presage danger for Macbeth. Was Macbeth right to suspect Macduff?

ACT IV

SCENE I. *A cavern. In the middle, a boiling caldron.*

[*Thunder. Enter the three Witches.*]

FIRST WITCH. Thrice the brinded cat hath mewed.

SECOND WITCH. Thrice and once the hedge pig whined.

THIRD WITCH. Harpier¹ cries, "'Tis time, 'tis time."

FIRST WITCH. Round about the caldron go;

In the poisoned entrails throw.

Toad, that under cold stone

Days and nights has thirty-one

Sweltered venom sleeping got,

Boil thou first i' the charmed pot.

ALL. Double, double toil and trouble;

Fire burn, and caldron bubble.

SECOND WITCH. Fillet of a fenny snake,

In the caldron boil and bake;

Eye of newt and toe of frog,

Wool of bat and tongue of dog,

Adder's fork and blind worm's sting,

Lizard's leg and howlet's wing,

For a charm of powerful trouble,

Like a hell broth boil and bubble.

ALL. Double, double toil and trouble;

Fire burn, and caldron bubble.

THIRD WITCH. Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,

Witches' mummy, maw and gulf²

Of the ravined salt-sea shark,

Root of hemlock digged i' the dark,

Liver of blaspheming Jew,

Gall of goat, and slips of yew

Slivered in the moon's eclipse,

Nose of Turk and Tartar's lips,

Finger of birth-strangled babe

Ditch-delivered by a drab,

¹*Harpier.* In Greek mythology a Harpy was a loathsome creature with the face of a woman and the body of a bird. The cat, the hedgehog, and the Harpy were evil spirits who attended the witches.

²*maw and gulf.* Throat and stomach.

Make the gruel thick and slab;³
 Add thereto a tiger's chaudron,⁴
 For the ingredients of our caldron.

ALL. Double, double toil and trouble;
 Fire burn, and caldron bubble.

SECOND WITCH. Cool it with a baboon's blood,
 Then the charm is firm and good.

[*Enter HECATE to the other three Witches.*]

HECATE. O, well done! I commend your pains;
 And every one shall share i' the gains;
 And now about the caldron sing,
 Like elves and fairies in a ring,
 Enchanting all that you put in.

[*Music and a song: "Black spirits," etc.*]

[*HECATE retires.*]

SECOND WITCH. By the pricking of my thumbs,
 Something wicked this way comes.
 Open, locks,
 Whoever knocks!

[*Enter MACBETH.*]

MACBETH. How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags!
 What is 't you do?

ALL. A deed without a name.

MACBETH. I conjure you, by that which you profess,
 Howe'er you come to know it, answer me;
 Though you untie the winds and let them fight
 Against the churches; though the yesty waves
 Confound and swallow navigation up;
 Though bladed corn be lodged and trees blown down;
 Though castles topple on their warders' heads;
 Though palaces and pyramids do slope
 Their heads to their foundations; though the treasure
 Of nature's germens tumble all together,
 Even till destruction sicken; answer me
 To what I ask you.

³slab. Slimy.

⁴chaudron. Entrails.

FIRST WITCH.

Speak.

SECOND WITCH.

Demand.

THIRD WITCH.

We'll answer.

FIRST WITCH. Say, if thou 'dst rather hear it from our mouths,
Or from our masters'?

MACBETH.

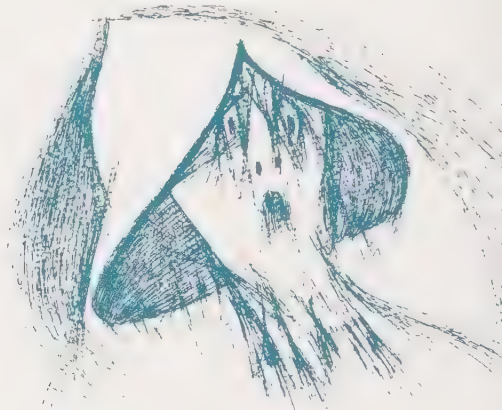
Call 'em; let me see 'em.

FIRST WITCH. Pour in sow's blood, that hath eaten
Her nine farrow; grease that's sweaten
From the murderer's gibbet throw
Into the flame.

ALL.

Come, high or low;
Thyself and office deftly show!

[*Thunder. First Apparition: an armed Head.*⁵]



MACBETH. Tell me, thou unknown power—

FIRST WITCH.

He knows thy thought.

Hear his speech, but say thou naught.

FIRST APPARITION. Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! beware Macduff;
Beware the thane of Fife. Dismiss me. Enough.

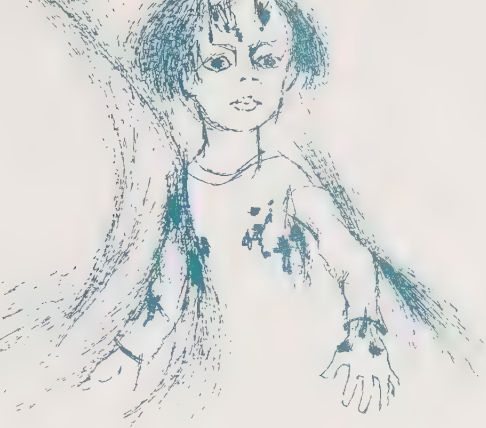
[*Descends.*]

MACBETH. Whate'er thou art, for thy good caution, thanks;

Thou hast harped my fear aright: but one word more—

FIRST WITCH. He will not be commanded: here's another,
More potent than the first.

⁵*an armed Head.* A head with a helmet on it. This apparition is prophetic of Macduff's bringing in Macbeth's head in Act V, Scene VIII.



[*Thunder. Second Apparition: a bloody Child.*⁶]

SECOND APPARITION. Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth!

MACBETH. Had I three ears, I 'ld hear thee.

SECOND APPARITION. Be bloody, bold, and resolute; laugh to scorn

The power of man, for none of woman born

Shall harm Macbeth.

[*Descends.*]

MACBETH. Then live, Macduff; what need I fear of thee?

But yet I'll make assurance double sure,

And take a bond of fate. Thou shalt not live;

That I may tell pale-hearted fear it lies,

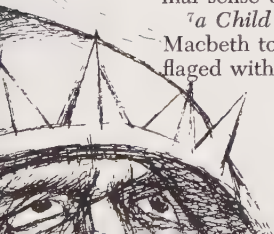
And sleep in spite of thunder.

[*Thunder. Third Apparition: a Child crowned, with a tree in his hand.*⁷]



⁶*a bloody Child.* As we learn in Act V, Scene VIII, "Macduff was from his mother's womb untimely ripp'd." The child was removed from his mother's body by Caesarean operation; thus it could be said that he was not "born" in the normal sense of the word.

⁷*a Child crowned, with a tree in his hand.* This is Malcolm, who will succeed Macbeth to the throne. As we learn in Act V, Scene IV, Malcolm's army, camouflaged with branches of trees, advances on Macbeth's castle.



FIRST WITCH. Show!

SECOND WITCH. Show!

THIRD WITCH. Show!

ALL. Show his eyes, and grieve his heart;

Come like shadows, so depart!

[A show of Eight Kings,⁸ the last with a glass in his hand; BANQUO'S Ghost following.]

MACBETH. Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo; down!

Thy crown doth sear mine eyeballs. And thy hair,

Thou other gold-bound brow, is like the first.

A third is like the former. Filthy hags!

Why do you show me this? A fourth! Start, eyes!

What, will the line stretch out to the crack of doom?

Another yet! A seventh! I'll see no more.

And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass

Which shows me many more; and some I see

That twofold balls and treble scepters⁹ carry.

Horrible sight! Now, I see, 'tis true;

For the blood-boltered Banquo smiles upon me,

And points at them for his. [Apparitions *vanish*.] What,
is this so?

⁸*Eight Kings*. The Stuart kings of Scotland. According to tradition the Stuarts were descendants of Banquo. The eighth king was James VI of Scotland, who became James I of England.

⁹*twofold balls and treble scepters*. Balls and scepters are symbols of sovereignty; James, who ruled England and Scotland, later added Ireland to his kingdom.



FIRST WITCH. Ay, sir, all this is so; but why
 Stands Macbeth thus amazedly?
 Come, sisters, cheer we up his sprites,
 And show the best of our delights.
 I'll charm the air to give a sound,
 While you perform your antic round;
 That this great king may kindly say,
 Our duties did his welcome pay.

[*Music. The Witches dance, and then vanish, with HECATE.*]

MACBETH. Where are they? Gone! Let this pernicious hour
 Stand aye accursèd in the calendar!
 Come in, without there!

[*Enter LENNOX.*]

LENNOX. What's your grace's will?

MACBETH. Saw you the weird sisters?

LENNOX. No, my lord.

MACBETH. Came they not by you?

LENNOX. No, my lord.

MACBETH. Infected be the air whereon they ride;
 And damned all those that trust them! I did hear
 The galloping of horse: who was 't came by?

LENNOX. 'Tis two or three, my lord, that bring you word
 Macduff is fled to England.

MACBETH. Fled to England!

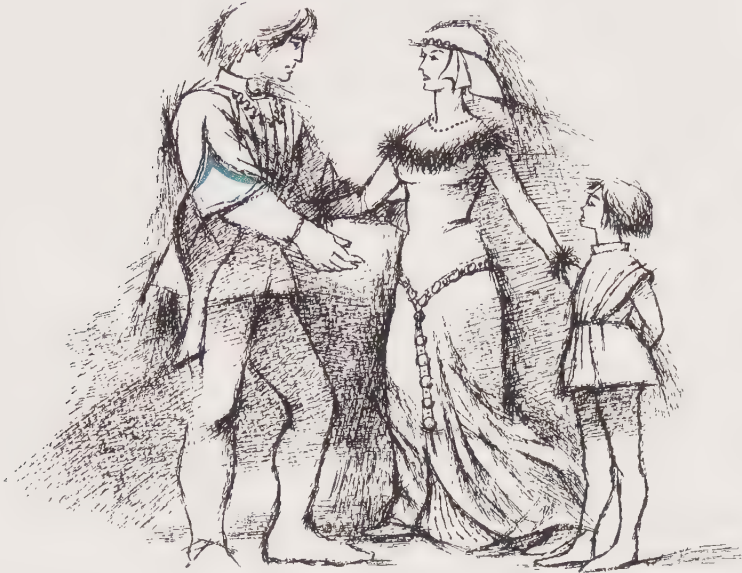
LENNOX. Ay, my good lord.

MACBETH. Time, thou anticipatest my dread exploits;
 The flighty purpose never is o'ertook
 Unless the deed go with it. From this moment
 The very firstlings of my heart shall be
 The firstlings of my hand. And even now,
 To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and done.
 The castle of Macduff I will surprise;
 Seize upon Fife; give to the edge o' the sword
 His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls
 That trace him in his line. No boasting like a fool;
 This deed I'll do before this purpose cool.
 But no more sights!—Where are these gentlemen?
 Come, bring me where they are.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *Fife. MACDUFF's castle.*

[*Enter LADY MACDUFF, her Son, and ROSS.*]



LADY MACDUFF. What had he done, to make him fly the land?

ROSS. You must have patience, madam.

LADY MACDUFF. He had none;
His flight was madness. When our actions do not,
Our fears do make us traitors.

ROSS. You know not
Whether it was his wisdom or his fear.

LADY MACDUFF. Wisdom! To leave his wife, to leave his babes,
His mansion and his titles, in a place
From whence himself does fly? He loves us not,
He wants the natural touch; for the poor wren,
The most diminutive of birds, will fight,
Her young ones in her nest, against the owl.
All is the fear and nothing is the love;
As little is the wisdom, where the flight
So runs against all reason.

ROSS. My dearest coz,
I pray you, school yourself; but for your husband,
He is noble, wise, judicious, and best knows
The fits o' the season. I dare not speak much further;

But cruel are the times when we are traitors
 And do not know ourselves; when we hold rumor
 From what we fear, yet know not what we fear,
 But float upon a wild and violent sea
 Each way and move. I take my leave of you;
 Shall not be long but I'll be here again.
 Things at the worst will cease, or else climb upward
 To what they were before. My pretty cousin,
 Blessing upon you!

LADY MACDUFF. Fathered he is, and yet he's fatherless.

ROSS. I am so much a fool, should I stay longer,
 It would be my disgrace and your discomfort.
 I take my leave at once. [Exit.]

LADY MACDUFF. Sirrah, your father's dead;
 And what will you do now? How will you live?

SON. As birds do, mother.

LADY MACDUFF. What, with worms and flies?

SON. With what I get, I mean; and so do they.

LADY MACDUFF. Poor bird! thou 'ldst never fear the net nor lime,
 The pitfall nor the gin.¹⁰

SON. Why should I, mother? Poor birds they are not set for.
 My father is not dead, for all your saying.

LADY MACDUFF. Yes, he is dead. How wilt thou do for a father?

SON. Nay, how will you do for a husband?

LADY MACDUFF. Why, I can buy me twenty at any market.

SON. Then you'll buy 'em to sell again.

LADY MACDUFF. Thou speak'st with all thy wit; and yet, i' faith,
 With wit enough for thee.

SON. Was my father a traitor, mother?

LADY MACDUFF. Ay, that he was.

SON. What is a traitor?

LADY MACDUFF. Why, one that swears and lies.

SON. And be all traitors that do so?

LADY MACDUFF. Every one that does so is a traitor, and must be
 hanged.

SON. And must they all be hanged that swear and lie?

¹⁰*gin*. Trap. Song birds were considered a delicacy. They were caught in nets, by smearing a sticky substance called bird-lime on branches, or in traps.



LADY MACDUFF. Every one.

SON. Who must hang them?

LADY MACDUFF. Why, the honest men.

SON. Then the liars and swearers are fools, for there are liars and swearers enow to beat the honest men and hang up them.

LADY MACDUFF. Now, God help thee, poor monkey! But how wilt thou do for a father?

SON. If he were dead, you 'ld weep for him; if you would not, it were a good sign that I should quickly have a new father.

LADY MACDUFF. Poor prattler, how thou talk'st!

[*Enter a Messenger.*]

MESSANGER. Bless you, fair dame! I am not to you known,
Though in your state of honor I am perfect.
I doubt some danger does approach you nearly.
If you will take a homely man's advice,
Be not found here; hence, with your little ones.
To fright you thus, methinks, I am too savage;
To do worse to you were fell cruelty,
Which is too nigh your person. Heaven preserve you!
I dare abide no longer.

[*Exit.*]

LADY MACDUFF.

Whither should I fly?

I have done no harm. But I remember now
 I am in this earthly world; where to do harm
 Is often laudable, to do good sometime
 Accounted dangerous folly. Why then, alas,
 Do I put up that womanly defense,
 To say I have done no harm?

[Enter Murderers.]

What are these faces?

FIRST MURDERER. Where is your husband?

LADY MACDUFF. I hope, in no place so unsanctified
 Where such as thou mayst find him.

FIRST MURDERER.

He's a traitor.

SON. Thou liest, thou shag-haired villain!

FIRST MURDERER.

What, you egg! [Stabbing him.]

Young fry of treachery!

SON.

He has killed me, mother:

Run away, I pray you!

[Dies.]

[Exit LADY MACDUFF, crying "Murder!"

Exeunt Murderers, following her.]



SCENE III. *England. Before the King's palace.*

[*Enter MALCOLM and MACDUFF.*]

MALCOLM. Let us seek out some desolate shade, and there
Weep our sad bosoms empty.

MACDUFF. Let us rather
Hold fast the mortal sword, and like good men
Bestride our downfall'n birthdom. Each new morn
New widows howl, new orphans cry, new sorrows
Strike heaven on the face, that it resounds
As if it felt with Scotland and yelled out
Like syllable of dolor.

MALCOLM. What I believe, I'll wail,
What know, believe, and what I can redress,
As I shall find the time to friend, I will.
What you have spoke, it may be so perchance.
This tyrant, whose sole name blisters our tongues,
Was once thought honest; you have loved him well.
He hath not touched you yet. I am young; but something
You may deserve of him through me, and wisdom
To offer up a weak, poor, innocent lamb
To appease an angry god.

MACDUFF. I am not treacherous.

MALCOLM. But Macbeth is.
A good and virtuous nature may recoil
In an imperial charge. But I shall crave your pardon;
That which you are my thoughts cannot transpose.
Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell.
Though all things foul would wear the brows of grace,
Yet grace must still look so.

MACDUFF. I have lost my hopes.

MALCOLM. Perchance even there where I did find my doubts.
Why in that rawness left you wife and child,
Those precious motives, those strong knots of love,
Without leave-taking? I pray you,
Let not my jealousies be your dishonors,
But mine own safeties. You may be rightlly just,
Whatever I shall think.

MACDUFF.

Bleed, bleed, poor country!

Great tyranny! lay thou thy basis sure,
 For goodness dare not check thee; wear thou thy wrongs;
 The title is affeered! Fare thee well, lord;
 I would not be the villain that thou think'st
 For the whole space that's in the tyrant's grasp,
 And the rich East to boot.

MALCOLM.

Be not offended;

I speak not as in absolute fear of you.
 I think our country sinks beneath the yoke;
 It weeps, it bleeds; and each new day a gash
 Is added to her wounds. I think withal
 There would be hands uplifted in my right;
 And here from gracious England have I offer
 Of goodly thousands. But, for all this,
 When I shall tread upon the tyrant's head,
 Or wear it on my sword, yet my poor country
 Shall have more vices than it had before,
 More suffer and more sundry ways than ever,
 By him that shall succeed.

MACDUFF.

What should he be?

MALCOLM. It is myself I mean; in whom I know
 All the particulars of vice so grafted
 That, when they shall be opened, black Macbeth
 Will seem as pure as snow, and the poor state
 Esteem him as a lamb, being compared
 With my confineless harms.

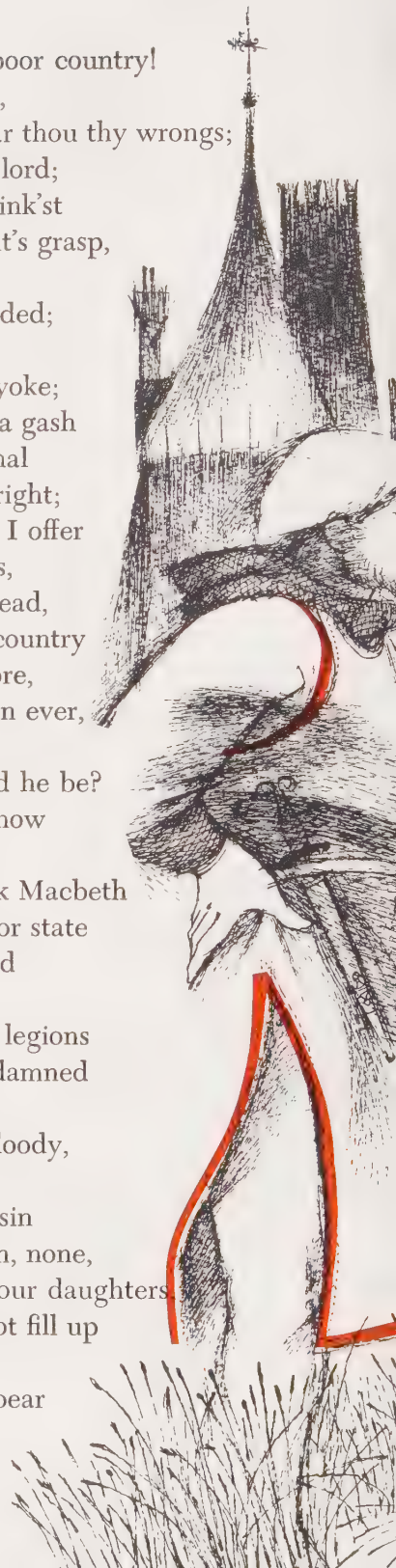
MACDUFF.

Not in the legions
 Of horrid hell can come a devil more damned
 In evils to top Macbeth.

MALCOLM.

I grant him bloody,

Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,
 Sudden, malicious, smacking of every sin
 That has a name; but there's no bottom, none,
 In my voluptuousness. Your wives, your daughters,
 Your matrons and your maids, could not fill up
 The cistern of my lust, and my desire
 All continent impediments would o'erbear



That did oppose my will. Better Macbeth
Than such an one to reign.

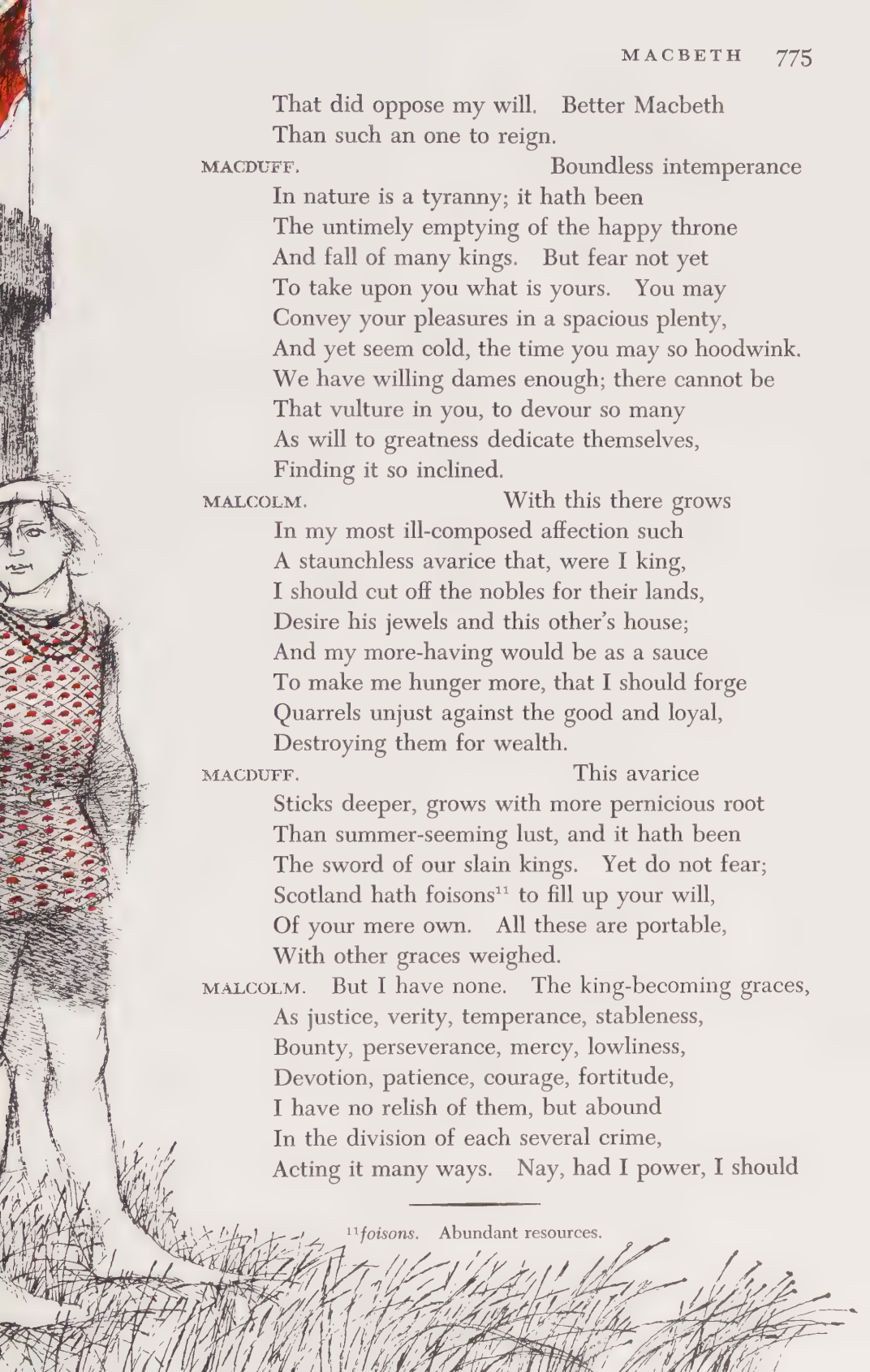
MACDUFF. Boundless intemperance
In nature is a tyranny; it hath been
The untimely emptying of the happy throne
And fall of many kings. But fear not yet
To take upon you what is yours. You may
Convey your pleasures in a spacious plenty,
And yet seem cold, the time you may so hoodwink.
We have willing dames enough; there cannot be
That vulture in you, to devour so many
As will to greatness dedicate themselves,
Finding it so inclined.

MALCOLM. With this there grows
In my most ill-composed affection such
A staunchless avarice that, were I king,
I should cut off the nobles for their lands,
Desire his jewels and this other's house;
And my more-having would be as a sauce
To make me hunger more, that I should forge
Quarrels unjust against the good and loyal,
Destroying them for wealth.

MACDUFF. This avarice
Sticks deeper, grows with more pernicious root
Than summer-seeming lust, and it hath been
The sword of our slain kings. Yet do not fear;
Scotland hath foisons¹¹ to fill up your will,
Of your mere own. All these are portable,
With other graces weighed.

MALCOLM. But I have none. The king-becoming graces,
As justice, verity, temperance, stableness,
Bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness,
Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude,
I have no relish of them, but abound
In the division of each several crime,
Acting it many ways. Nay, had I power, I should

¹¹foisons. Abundant resources.



Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell,
 Uproar the universal peace, confound
 All unity on earth.

MACDUFF. O Scotland, Scotland!

MALCOLM. If such a one be fit to govern, speak.
 I am as I have spoken.

MACDUFF. Fit to govern!
 No, not to live. O nation miserable
 With an untitled tyrant bloody-scepter'd,
 When shalt thou see thy wholesome days again,
 Since that the truest issue of thy throne
 By his own interdiction stands accurs'd,
 And does blaspheme his breed? Thy royal father
 Was a most sainted king; the queen that bore thee,
 Oftener upon her knees than on her feet,
 Died every day she lived. Fare thee well!
 These evils thou repeat'st upon thyself
 Have banished me from Scotland. O my breast,
 Thy hope ends here!

MALCOLM. Macduff, this noble passion,
 Child of integrity, hath from my soul
 Wiped the black scruples, reconciled my thoughts
 To thy good truth and honor. Devilish Macbeth
 By many of these trains hath sought to win me
 Into his power, and modest wisdom plucks me
 From overcredulous haste; but God above
 Deal between thee and me! for even now
 I put myself to thy direction, and
 Unspeak mine own detraction, here abjure
 The taints and blames I laid upon myself,
 For strangers to my nature. I am yet
 Unknown to woman, never was forsworn,
 Scarcely have coveted what was mine own,
 At no time broke my faith, would not betray
 The devil to his fellow, and delight
 No less in truth than life; my first false speaking
 Was this upon myself. What I am truly,
 Is thine and my poor country's to command;

Whither indeed, before thy here-approach,
 Old Siward, with ten thousand warlike men,
 Already at a point, was setting forth.
 Now we'll together; and the chance of goodness
 Be like our warranted quarrel! Why are you silent?

MACDUFF. Such welcome and unwelcome things at once
 'Tis hard to reconcile.

[*Enter a Doctor.*]

MALCOLM. Well; more anon.—Comes the king forth, I pray you?

DOCTOR. Aye, sir; there are a crew of wretched souls
 That stay his cure. Their malady convinces
 The great assay of art¹²; but at his touch—
 Such sanctity hath heaven given his hand—
 They presently amend.

MALCOLM. I thank you, doctor. [*Exit Doctor.*]

MACDUFF. What's the disease he means?

MALCOLM. 'Tis call'd the evil¹³;

A most miraculous work in this good king;
 Which often, since my here-remain in England,
 I have seen him do. How he solicits heaven,
 Himself best knows; but strangely-visited people,
 All swollen and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye,
 The mere despair of surgery, he cures,
 Hanging a golden stamp about their necks,
 Put on with holy prayers; and 'tis spoken,
 To the succeeding royalty he leaves
 The healing benediction. With this strange virtue,
 He hath a heavenly gift of prophecy,
 And sundry blessings hang about his throne,
 That speak him full of grace.

[*Enter ROSS.*]

MACDUFF. See, who comes here?

MALCOLM. My countryman; but yet I know him not.

¹²*Their malady convinces the great assay of art.* Their illness baffles the healing arts of doctors.

¹³*the evil.* A tuberculous skin disease, in Shakespeare's day called the "king's evil" because it was believed that the touch of the King's hand could cure it. James I, before whom *Macbeth* was acted, believed he had this power.

MACDUFF. My ever-gentle cousin, welcome hither.

MALCOLM. I know him now. Good God, betimes remove
The means that makes us strangers!

ROSS. Sir, amen.

MACDUFF. Stands Scotland where it did?

ROSS. Alas, poor country!

Almost afraid to know itself. It cannot
Be called our mother, but our grave; where nothing,
But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile;
Where sighs and groans and shrieks that rend the air
Are made, not marked; where violent sorrow seems
A modern ecstasy. The dead man's knell
Is there scarce asked for who; and good men's lives
Expire before the flowers in their caps,
Dying or ere they sicken.

MACDUFF. O, relation¹⁴

Too nice, and yet too true!

MALCOLM. What's the newest grief?

ROSS. That of an hour's age doth hiss the speaker;¹⁵

Each minute teems a new one.

MACDUFF. How does my wife?

ROSS. Why, well.

MACDUFF. And all my children?

ROSS. Well too.

MACDUFF. The tyrant has not battered at their peace?

ROSS. No; they were well at peace when I did leave 'em.

MACDUFF. Be not a niggard of your speech; how goes 't?

ROSS. When I came hither to transport the tidings,
Which I have heavily borne, there ran a rumor
Of many worthy fellows that were out;¹⁶
Which was to my belief witnessed the rather,
For that I saw the tyrant's power afoot.
Now is the time of help; your eye in Scotland
Would create soldiers, make our women fight,
To doff their dire distresses.

¹⁴*relation.* Account.

¹⁵*doth hiss the speaker.* Things are happening so fast that people hiss at anyone who reports news so old that it happened an hour ago.

¹⁶*out.* Up in arms; rebelling.

MALCOLM. Be 't their comfort
 We are coming thither. Gracious England hath
 Lent us good Siward and ten thousand men;
 An older and a better soldier none
 That Christendom gives out.

ROSS. Would I could answer
 This comfort with the like! But I have words
 That would be howled out in the desert air,
 Where hearing should not latch them.

MACDUFF. What concern they?
 The general cause? or is it a fee grief
 Due to some single breast?

ROSS. No mind that's honest
 But in it shares some woe; though the main part
 Pertains to you alone.

MACDUFF. If it be mine,
 Keep it not from me, quickly let me have it.

ROSS. Let not your ears despise my tongue for ever,
 Which shall possess them with the heaviest sound
 That ever yet they heard.

MACDUFF. Hum! I guess at it.

ROSS. Your castle is surprised; your wife and babes
 Savagely slaughtered: to relate the manner,
 Were, on the quarry of these murdered deer,
 To add the death of you.

MALCOLM. Merciful heaven!
 What, man! Ne'er pull your hat upon your brows;
 Give sorrow words. The grief that does not speak
 Whispers the o'er-fraught heart and bids it break.

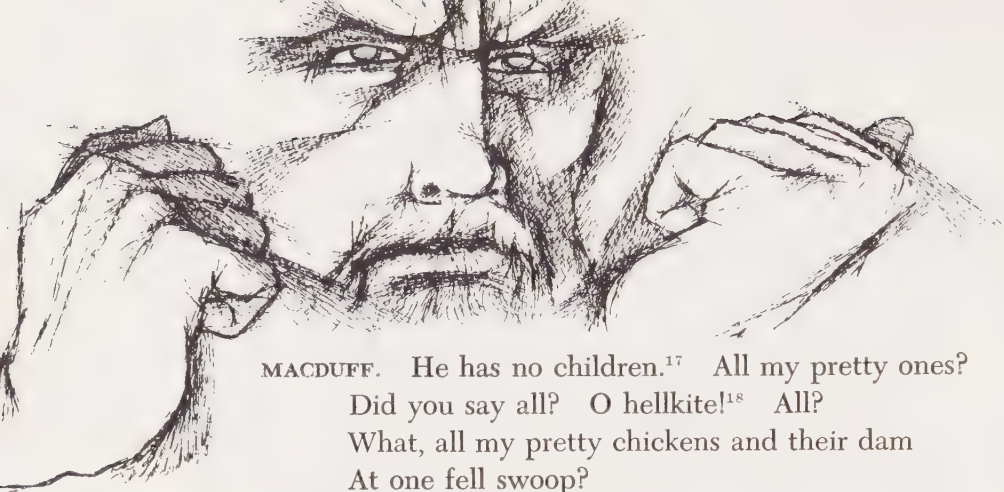
MACDUFF. My children, too?

ROSS. Wife, children, servants, all
 That could be found.

MACDUFF. And I must be from thence!
 My wife killed, too?

ROSS. I have said.

MALCOLM. Be comforted.
 Let's make us medicines of our great revenge,
 To cure this deadly grief.



MACDUFF. He has no children.¹⁷ All my pretty ones?
Did you say all? O hellkite!¹⁸ All?
What, all my pretty chickens and their dam
At one fell swoop?

MALCOLM. Dispute it like a man.

MACDUFF. I shall do so;
But I must also feel it as a man.
I cannot but remember such things were,
That were most precious to me. Did heaven look on,
And would not take their part? Sinful Macduff,
They were all struck for thee! Naught that I am,
Not for their own demerits, but for mine,
Fell slaughter on their souls Heaven rest them now!

MALCOLM. Be this the whetstone of your sword; let grief
Convert to anger; blunt not the heart, enrage it.

MACDUFF. O, I could play the woman with mine eyes
And braggart with my tongue! But, gentle heavens,
Cut short all intermission. Front to front
Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself;
Within my sword's length set him; if he 'scape,
Heaven forgive him, too!

MALCOLM. This tune goes manly.
Come go we to the king; our power is ready;
Our lack is nothing but our leave. Macbeth
Is ripe for shaking, and the powers above
Put on their instruments. Receive what cheer you may;
The night is long that never finds the day. [Exeunt.]

¹⁷*He has no children.* The reference could be to either Malcolm or Macbeth. If Malcolm, the thought would be, "You say, 'Be comforted,' you who have no children!" If Macbeth, the meaning might be that if Macbeth had had children of his own, he could not have been so cruel.

¹⁸*hellkite!* The kite is a bird of prey that feeds upon dead animals.

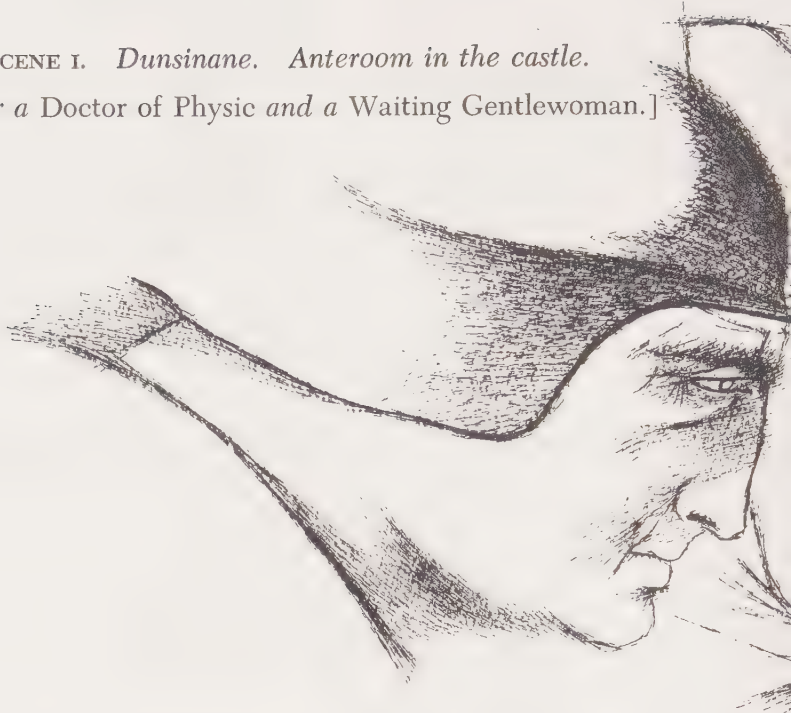
Discussion

1. In what way does the witch scene add to the feeling of impending doom?
2. How does Macbeth's attitude toward the witches affect our opinion of him?
3. What does Macbeth learn from the witches? Describe each apparition.
4. What information do the witches withhold from Macbeth?
5. What immediate plan results from Macbeth's interview with the witches?
6. Point out a line which indicates Macbeth may be losing faith in the prophecies of the witches.
7. In what ways has Macbeth's character changed since he has become king?
8. What sort of person is Lady Macduff? Do you think she means all her remarks to be taken literally?
9. Can you think of any reasons why Macduff may have gone to England alone?
10. What two purposes are served by the dialogue between Lady Macduff and her son?
11. Does Scene III seem dramatically different from other scenes in the play? It is interesting to note that in this scene Shakespeare follows Holinshed more closely than usual.
12. How does Malcolm test Macduff? Why do you think he does so?
13. What specific points are brought out in the discussion about good and bad rulers? Would this part of the scene be more interesting to an audience in Shakespeare's day than now?
14. What plans are underway for driving Macbeth from the throne?
15. Since the doctor's mention of the "king's evil" has no bearing on the plot, why do you think Shakespeare introduced the incident?
16. Why does Ross delay telling Macduff about the murder of his wife and children?
17. How does Macduff take the bad news? Note all his remarks carefully before answering.
18. How does the close of Act IV bring us sharply back to the main plot?
19. Why does Shakespeare want us to admire Macduff?
20. What is the meaning of the last line in the act?

ACT V

SCENE I. *Dunsinane. Anteroom in the castle.*

[*Enter a Doctor of Physic and a Waiting Gentlewoman.*]



DOCTOR. I have two nights watched with you, but can perceive no truth in your report. When was it she last walked?

GENTLEWOMAN. Since his majesty went into the field, I have seen her rise from her bed, throw her nightgown upon her, unlock her closet, take forth paper, fold it, write upon 't, read it, afterwards seal it, and again return to bed; yet all this while in a most fast sleep.

DOCTOR. A great perturbation in nature, to receive at once the benefit of sleep, and do the effects of watching! In this slumbry agitation, besides her walking and other actual performances, what, at any time, have you heard her say?

GENTLEWOMAN. That, sir, which I will not report after her.

DOCTOR. You may to me: and 'tis most meet you should.

GENTLEWOMAN. Neither to you nor anyone; having no witness to confirm my speech.

[*Enter LADY MACBETH, with a taper.*]

Lo you, here she comes! This is her very guise; and, upon my life, fast asleep. Observe her; stand close.

DOCTOR. How came she by that light?



GENTLEWOMAN. Why, it stood by her. She has light by her continually; 'tis her command.

DOCTOR. You see, her eyes are open.

GENTLEWOMAN. Aye, but their sense is shut.

DOCTOR. What is it she does now? Look, how she rubs her hands.

GENTLEWOMAN. It is an accustomed action with her, to seem thus washing her hands. I have known her continue in this a quarter of an hour.

LADY MACBETH. Yet here's a spot.

DOCTOR. Hark! She speaks. I will set down what comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance the more strongly.

LADY MACBETH. Out, damned spot! Out, I say!—One: two: why, then 'tis time to do 't.—Hell is murky!—Fie, my lord, fie! A soldier, and afeard? What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account?—Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?

DOCTOR. Do you mark that?

LADY MACBETH. The thane of Fife had a wife; where is she now?—
What, will these hands ne'er be clean?—No more o' that, my
lord, no more o' that; you mar all with this starting.¹

DOCTOR. Go to, go to; you have known what you should not.

GENTLEWOMAN. She has spoke what she should not, I am sure of
that; Heaven knows what she has known.

LADY MACBETH. Here's the smell of the blood still; all the perfumes
of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh, oh, oh!

DOCTOR. What a sigh is there! The heart is sorely charged.

GENTLEWOMAN. I would not have such a heart in my bosom for
the dignity of the whole body.

DOCTOR. Well, well, well—

GENTLEWOMAN. Pray God it be, sir.

DOCTOR. This disease is beyond my practice; yet I have known
those which have walked in their sleep who have died holily
in their beds.

LADY MACBETH. Wash your hands, put on your nightgown; look
not so pale.—I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried; he can-
not come out on 's grave.

DOCTOR. Even so?

LADY MACBETH. To bed, to bed! There's knocking at the gate.
Come, come, come, come, give me your hand. What's done
cannot be undone.—To bed, to bed, to bed! [Exit.]

DOCTOR. Will she go now to bed?

GENTLEWOMAN. Directly.

DOCTOR. Foul whisperings are abroad; unnatural deeds
Do breed unnatural troubles; infected minds
To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets.
More needs she the divine than the physician.
God, God forgive us all! Look after her;
Remove from her the means of all annoyance,²
And still keep eyes upon her. So, good night;
My mind she has mated,³ and amazed my sight.
I think, but dare not speak.

GENTLEWOMAN. Good night, good doctor. [Exeunt.]

¹*you mar all with this starting.* She is reliving the scene where Banquo's ghost appeared.

²*annoyance.* Harm. The doctor is afraid she may commit suicide.

³*mated.* Checkmated. He can't think what to do.

SCENE II. *The country near Dunsinane.*

[*Drum and colors. Enter MENTEITH, CAITHNESS, ANGUS, LENNOX, and Soldiers.*]



MENTEITH. The English power is near, led on by Malcolm,
His uncle Siward and the good Macduff.
Revenes burn in them; for their dear causes
Would to the bleeding and the grim alarm
Excite the mortified man.

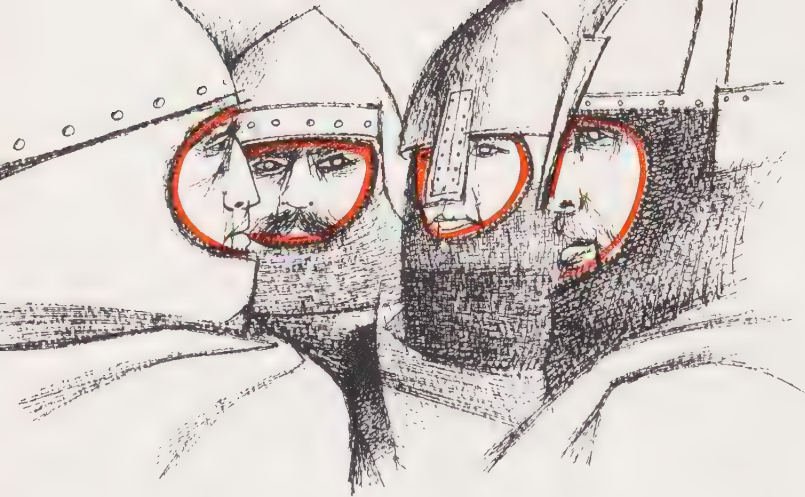
ANGUS. Near Birnam wood
Shall we well meet them; that way are they coming.

CAITHNESS. Who knows if Donalbain be with his brother?

LENNOX. For certain, sir, he is not; I have a file
Of all the gentry. There is Siward's son,
And many unrough youths that even now
Protest their first of manhood.

MENTEITH. What does the tyrant?

CAITHNESS. Great Dunsinane he strongly fortifies.
Some say he's mad; others that lesser hate him
Do call it valiant fury; but, for certain,
He cannot buckle his distempered cause
Within the belt of rule.



ANGUS.

Now does he feel
His secret murders sticking on his hands;
Now minutely revolts upbraid his faith-breach;
Those he commands move only in command,
Nothing in love. Now does he feel his title
Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe
Upon a dwarfish thief.

MENTEITH.

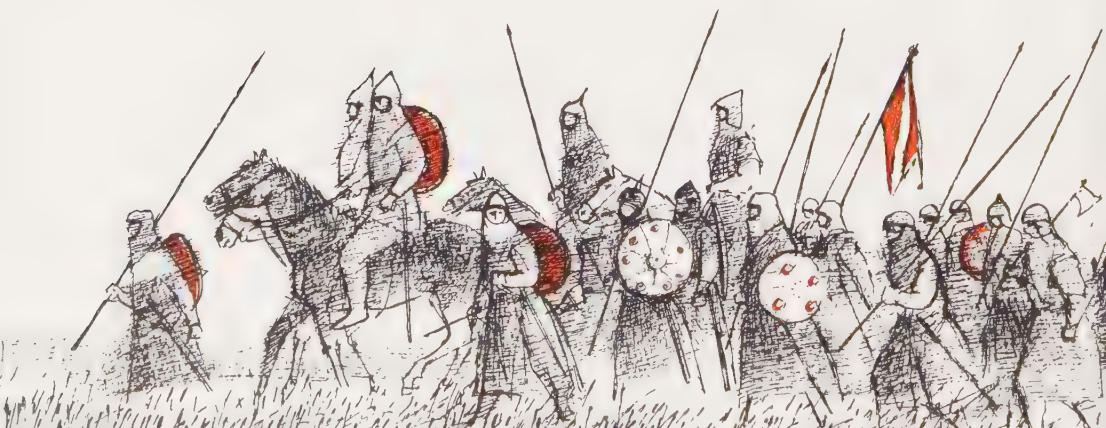
Who then shall blame
His pestered senses to recoil and start,
When all that is within him does condemn
Itself for being there?

CAITHNESS.

Well, march we on,
To give obedience where 'tis truly owed.
Meet we the medicine of the sickly weal,
And with him pour we in our country's purge
Each drop of us.

LENNOX.

Or so much as it needs,
To dew the sovereign flower and drown the weeds,
Make we our march toward Birnam. [*Exeunt, marching.*]



SCENE III. *Dunsinane. A room in the castle.*

[*Enter MACBETH, Doctor, and Attendants.*]

MACBETH. Bring me no more reports; let them fly all;
Till Birnam wood remove to Dunsinane,
I cannot taint with fear. What's the boy Malcolm?
Was he not born of woman? The spirits that know
All mortal consequences have pronounced me thus:
"Fear not, Macbeth; no man that's born of woman
Shall e'er have power upon thee." Then fly, false thanes,
And mingle with the English epicures!⁴
The mind I sway by and the heart I bear
Shall never sag with doubt nor shake with fear.

[*Enter a Servant.*]



The devil damn thee black, thou cream-faced loon!
Where got'st thou that goose look?

SERVANT. There is ten thousand—

MACBETH.

Geese, villain?

SERVANT.

Soldiers, sir.

MACBETH. Go, prick thy face, and over-red thy fear,
Thou lily-livered boy. What soldiers, patch?
Death of thy soul! those linen cheeks of thine
Are counselors to fear. What soldiers, whey-face?

⁴*epicures.* The Scots thought of the English as gluttons.

SERVANT. The English force, so please you.

MACBETH. Take thy face hence. [Exit Servant.]

Seyton!—I am sick at heart,
When I behold—Seyton, I say!—This push
Will cheer me ever, or disseat me now.
I have lived long enough. My way of life
Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf;
And that which should accompany old age,
As honor, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have; but, in their stead,
Curses, not loud but deep, mouth honor, breath,
Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dare not.⁵
Seyton!

[Enter SEYTON.]

SEYTON. What is your gracious pleasure?

MACBETH. What news more?

SEYTON. All is confirmed, my lord, which was reported.

MACBETH. I'll fight till from my bones my flesh be hacked.
Give me my armor.

SEYTON. 'Tis not needed yet.

MACBETH. I'll put it on.
Send out moe horses; skirr the country round;
Hang those that talk of fear. Give me mine armor.
How does your patient, doctor?

DOCTOR. Not so sick, my lord,
As she is troubled with thick-coming fancies,
That keep her from her rest.

MACBETH. Cure her of that.
Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased,
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,
Raze out the written troubles of the brain
And with some sweet oblivious antidote
Cleanse the stuffed bosom of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart?

DOCTOR. Therein the patient
Must minister to himself.

⁵*dare not.* Macbeth feels sorry for those of his subjects who are afraid to defy him.



MACBETH. Throw physic to the dogs; I'll none of it.
Come, put mine armor on; give me my staff.
Seyton, send out. Doctor, the thanes fly from me.
Come, sir, dispatch. If thou couldst, doctor, cast⁶
The water of my land, find her disease,
And purge it to a sound and pristine health,
I would applaud thee to the very echo,
That should applaud again.—Pull 't off, I say.⁷—
What rhubarb, senna, or what purgative drug,
Would scour these English hence? Hear'st thou of them?
DOCTOR. Ay, my good lord; your royal preparation
Makes us hear something.

MACBETH. Bring it after me.
I will not be afraid of death and bane,
Till Birnam forest come to Dunsinane.
DOCTOR [*Aside*]. Were I from Dunsinane away and clear,
Profit again should hardly draw me here.⁸ [*Exeunt.*]

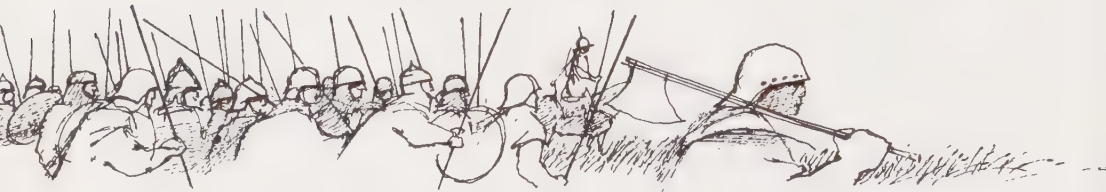
⁶*cast*. Examine. Many diseases are caused by contaminated water, but not, of course, Lady Macbeth's.

⁷*Pull 't off, I say*. This remark is directed to Seyton, who has been trying to help Macbeth on with his armor.

⁸*should hardly draw me here*. This remark is not in keeping with the doctor's character and may have been added by some actor who wanted to "hog the spotlight" as the scene ended.

SCENE IV. *Country near Birnam wood.*

[*Drum and colors. Enter MALCOLM, old SIWARD and his Son, MACDUFF, MENTEITH, CAITHNESS, ANGUS, LENNOX, ROSS, and Soldiers marching.*]



MALCOLM. Cousins, I hope the days are near at hand
That chambers⁹ will be safe.

MENTEITH. We doubt it nothing.

SIWARD. What wood is this before us?

MENTEITH. The wood of Birnam.

MALCOLM. Let every soldier hew him down a bough
And bear it before him; thereby shall we shadow
The numbers of our host and make discovery
Err in report of us.

SOLDIERS. It shall be done.

SIWARD. We learn no other but the confident tyrant
Keeps still in Dunsinane, and will endure
Our setting down before 't.

MALCOLM. 'Tis his main hope;
For where there is advantage to be given,
Both more and less have given him the revolt,
And none serve with him but constrained things
Whose hearts are absent, too.

MACDUFF. Let our just censures
Attend the true event, and put we on
Industrious soldiership.

SIWARD. The time approaches
That will with due decision make us know
What we shall say we have and what we owe.
Thoughts speculative their unsure hopes relate,
But certain issue strokes must arbitrate;
Towards which advance the war. [Exeunt, marching.]

⁹*chambers.* Bed-chambers. Malcolm may be recalling the murder of his father as he slept.

SCENE V. *Dunsinane. Within the castle.*

[*Enter MACBETH, SEYTON, and Soldiers, with drum and colors.*]

MACBETH. Hang out our banners on the outward walls;
The cry is still, "They come!" Our castle's strength
Will laugh a siege to scorn; here let them lie
Till famine and the ague eat them up.
Were they not forced,¹⁰ with those that should be ours,
We might have met them dareful, beard to beard,
And beat them backward home. [*A cry of women within.*]
What is that noise?

SEYTON. It is the cry of women, my good lord. [*Exit.*]

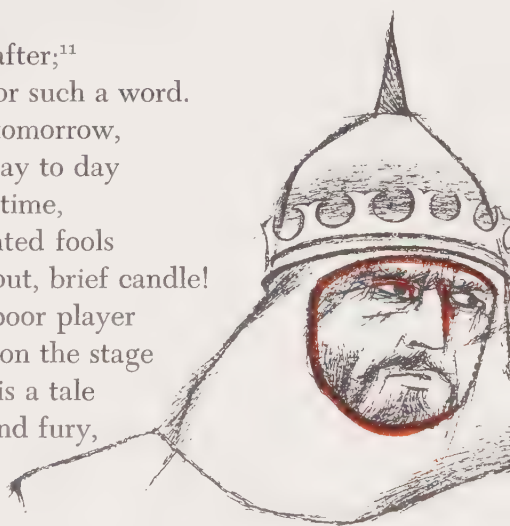
MACBETH. I have almost forgot the taste of fears.
The time has been, my senses would have cooled
To hear a night shriek, and my fell of hair
Would at a dismal treatise rouse and stir
As life were in 't. I have supped full with horrors;
Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts,
Cannot once start me.

[*Re-enter SEYTON.*]

Wherefore was that cry?

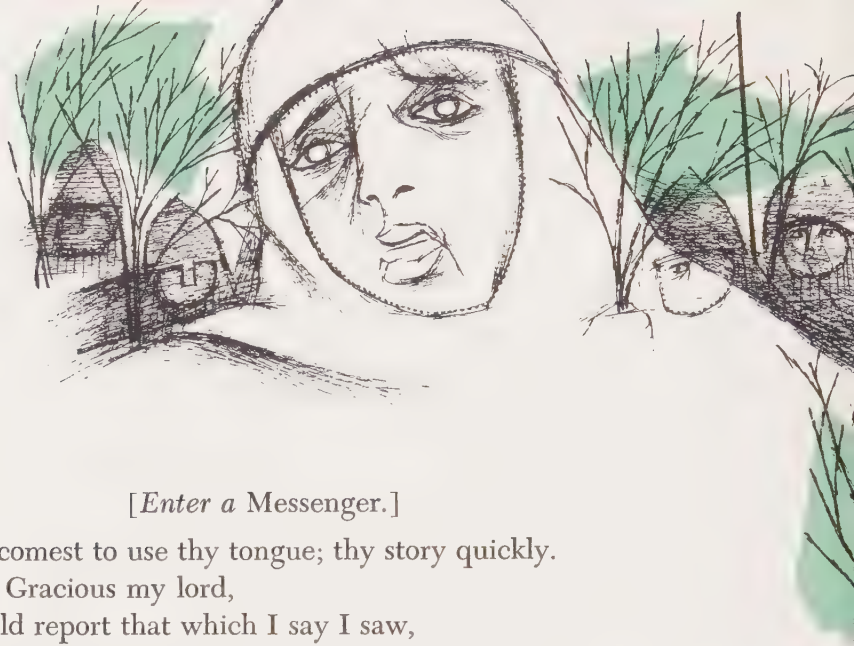
SEYTON. The queen, my lord, is dead.

MACBETH. She should have died hereafter;¹¹
There would have been a time for such a word.
Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
To the last syllable of recorded time,
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more. It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.



¹⁰*forced.* Reinforced.

¹¹*She should have died hereafter.* Faced with an attacking army, Macbeth cannot take time out for mourning. The following lines indicate that nothing—not even the death of his wife—makes any difference to Macbeth any more.



[Enter a Messenger.]

Thou comest to use thy tongue; thy story quickly.

MESSENGER. Gracious my lord,
I should report that which I say I saw,
But know not how to do it.

MACBETH. Well, say, sir.

MESSENGER. As I did stand my watch upon the hill,
I looked toward Birnam, and anon, methought,
The wood began to move.

MACBETH. Liar and slave!

MESSENGER. Let me endure your wrath, if 't be not so.
Within this three mile may you see it coming;
I say, a moving grove.

MACBETH. If thou speak'st false,
Upon the next tree shalt thou hang alive,
Till famine cling thee; if thy speech be sooth,
I care not if thou dost for me as much.
I pull in resolution, and begin
To doubt the equivocation of the fiend
That lies like truth: "Fear not, till Birnam wood
Do come to Dunsinane." And now a wood
Comes toward Dunsinane. Arm, arm, and out!
If this which he avouches does appear,
There is nor flying hence nor tarrying here.
I 'gin to be aweary of the sun,
And wish the estate o' the world were now undone.
Ring the alarum-bell! Blow, wind! come, wrack!
At least we'll die with harness on our back.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE VI. *Dunsinane. Before the castle.*

[*Drum and colors. Enter MALCOLM, old SIWARD, MACDUFF, and their Army, with boughs.*]



MALCOLM. Now near enough; your leavy screens throw down,
And show like those you are. You, worthy uncle,
Shall, with my cousin, your right noble son,
Lead our first battle.¹² Worthy Macduff and we
Shall take upon 's what else remains to do,
According to our order.

Fare you well.

SIWARD. Do we but find the tyrant's power tonight,
Let us be beaten, if we cannot fight.

MACDUFF. Make all our trumpets speak; give them all breath,
Those clamorous harbingers of blood and death.

[*Exeunt. Alarums continued.*]

¹²*battle.* Battalion.

SCENE VII. *Another part of the field.*

[*Enter MACBETH.*]

MACBETH. They have tied me to a stake; I cannot fly,
But, bearlike,¹³ I must fight the course. What's he
That was not born of woman? Such a one
Am I to fear, or none.

[*Enter young SIWARD.*]

YOUNG SIWARD. What is thy name?

MACBETH. Thou'lt be afraid to hear it.

YOUNG SIWARD. No; though thou call'st thyself a hotter name
Than any is in hell.

MACBETH. My name's Macbeth.

YOUNG SIWARD. The devil himself could not pronounce a title
More hateful to mine ear.

MACBETH. No, nor more fearful.

YOUNG SIWARD. Thou liest, abhorred tyrant; with my sword
I'll prove the lie thou speak'st.

[*They fight and young SIWARD is slain.*]

MACBETH. Thou wast born of woman.

But swords I smile at, weapons laugh to scorn,
Brandished by man that's of a woman born.

[*Exit.*]

¹³*bearlike.* Bear-baiting was a popular sport in Shakespeare's day. The bear was tied to a stake and set upon by dogs.





[*Alarums. Enter MACDUFF.*]

MACDUFF. That way the noise is. Tyrant, show thy face!
If thou be'st slain and with no stroke of mine.
My wife and children's ghosts will haunt me still.
I cannot strike at wretched kerns, whose arms
Are hired to bear their staves; either thou, Macbeth,
Or else my sword with an unbattered edge
I sheathe again undeeded. There thou shouldst be;
By this great clatter, one of greatest note
Seems bruited. Let me find him, fortune!
And more I beg not. [Exit. *Alarums.*]

[*Enter MALCOLM and old SIWARD.*]

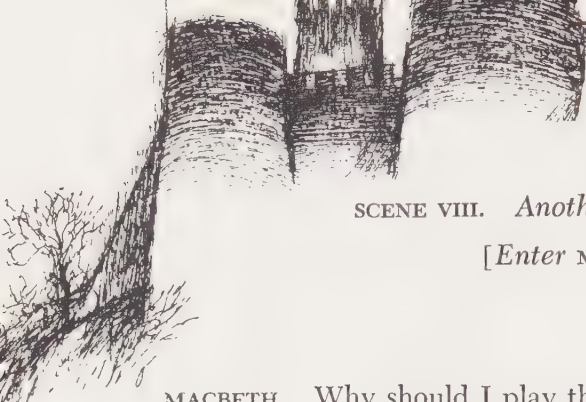
SIWARD. This way, my lord; the castle's gently rendered:¹⁴
The tyrant's people on both sides do fight;
The noble thanes do bravely in the war;
The day almost itself professes yours,
And little is to do.

MALCOLM. We have met with foes
That strike beside us.¹⁵

SIWARD. Enter, sir, the castle.
[*Exeunt. Alarums.*]

¹⁴*rendered.* Surrendered.

¹⁵*strike beside us.* Purposely miss.



SCENE VIII. *Another part of the field.*

[*Enter* MACBETH.]

MACBETH. Why should I play the Roman fool,¹⁶ and die
On mine own sword? Whiles I see lives, the gashes
Do better upon them.

[*Enter* MACDUFF.]

MACDUFF. Turn, hell hound, turn!

MACBETH. Of all men else I have avoided thee.
But get thee back; my soul is too much charged
With blood of thine already.

MACDUFF. I have no words,
My voice is in my sword, thou bloodier villain
Than terms can give thee out! [*They fight.*]

MACBETH. Thou lovest labor.
As easy mayst thou the intrenchant air
With thy keen sword impress as make me bleed.
Let fall thy blade on vulnerable crests;
I bear a charmed life, which must not yield
To one of woman born.

MACDUFF. Despair thy charm;
And let the angel whom thou still hast served
Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb
Untimely ripped.

MACBETH. Accursed be that tongue that tells me so,
For it hath cowed my better part of man!
And be these juggling fiends no more believed
That palter with us in a double sense,
That keep the word of promise to our ear,
And break it to our hope. I'll not fight with thee.

¹⁶*Roman fool.* Among the Romans it was considered noble for a defeated commander to kill himself. In Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* both Brutus and Cassius commit suicide.

MACDUFF. Then yield thee, coward,
 And live to be the show and gaze o' the time.
 We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,
 Painted upon a pole, and underwrit,
 "Here may you see the tyrant."

MACBETH. I will not yield,
 To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet
 And to be baited with the rabble's curse.
 Though Birnam wood be come to Dunsinane,
 And thou opposed, being of no woman born,
 Yet I will try the last. Before my body
 I throw my warlike shield. Lay on, Macduff,
 And damned be him that first cries "Hold, enough!"

[*Exeunt, fighting. Alarums.*]





[*Retreat. Flourish. Enter, with drum and colors, MALCOLM, old SIWARD, ROSS, the other Thanes, and Soldiers.*]

MALCOLM. I would the friends we miss were safe arrived.

SIWARD. Some must go off; and yet, by these I see,
So great a day as this is cheaply bought.

MALCOLM. Macduff is missing, and your noble son.

ROSS. Your son, my lord, has paid a soldier's debt.
He only lived but till he was a man;
The which no sooner had his prowess confirmed
In the unshrinking station where he fought,
But like a man he died.

SIWARD. Then he is dead?

ROSS. Ay, and brought off the field. Your cause of sorrow
Must not be measured by his worth, for then
It hath no end.

SIWARD. Had he his hurts before?

ROSS. Ay, on the front.

SIWARD. Why then, God's soldier be he!
Had I as many sons as I have hairs,
I would not wish them to a fairer death.
And so, his knell is knolled.

MALCOLM. He's worth more sorrow,
And that I'll spend for him.

SIWARD. He's worth no more.
They say he parted well, and paid his score;
And so, God be with him! Here comes newer comfort.



[*Re-enter MACDUFF, with MACBETH'S head.*]

MACDUFF. Hail, king! for so thou art. Behold, where stands
The usurper's cursèd head. The time is free.
I see thee compassed with thy kingdom's pearl,
That speak my salutation in their minds;
Whose voices I desire aloud with mine:
Hail, King of Scotland!

ALL. Hail, King of Scotland! [*Flourish.*]

MALCOLM. We shall not spend a large expense of time
Before we reckon with your several loves,
And make us even with you. My thanes and kinsmen,
Henceforth be earls, the first that ever Scotland
In such an honor named. What's more to do,
Which would be planted newly with the time,
As calling home our exiled friends abroad
That fled the snares of watchful tyranny;
Producing forth the cruel ministers
Of this dead butcher and his fiendlike queen,
Who, as 'tis thought, by self and violent hands
Took off her life; this, and what needful else
That calls upon us, by the grace of Grace,
We will perform in measure, time, and place;
So, thanks to all at once and to each one,
Whom we invite to see us crowned at Scone.

[*Flourish. Exeunt.*]

Discussion

1. Since there is no basis in Holinshed for Scene I, why do you think Shakespeare wrote it?
2. What change has occurred in Lady Macbeth? Has Shakespeare made adequate preparation for this change? You may need to reread some of the earlier scenes before answering this question.
3. In what way does Scene I support the claim that Shakespeare was a keen student of human nature?
4. What characteristics does the doctor attending Lady Macbeth have in common with good doctors today?
In the light of our present-day knowledge of psychology, does it seem more reasonable that it should be Lady Macbeth rather than Macbeth who has the mental breakdown?
6. What indication is there in Scene I that the doctor fears Lady Macbeth may attempt suicide?
7. In the light of Scene I do you think it fair of some critics to claim that Shakespeare saw nobility of character only in aristocrats?
8. On which of the murders is Lady Macbeth's mind dwelling most painfully?
9. What important information about Macbeth is given in Scene II?
10. What does Scene III tell us about Macbeth's state of mind?
11. Is there any indication in Scene III that Macbeth is losing confidence in the prophecies of the witches?
12. Is Macbeth sincere in the speech beginning, "I am sick at heart"?
13. Does Macbeth's conversation with the doctor reveal true love for his wife or merely worry about his own difficulties? Study the lines carefully before answering.
14. What purpose is served by Scene IV? Does the strategy of having the soldiers carry branches seem reasonable?
15. In Scene V we are again given an insight into Macbeth's mind. Does he realize that the end of his power, if not of his life, is drawing near?
16. How does Macbeth receive the news of his wife's death? Is Shakespeare right in making Macbeth react in this way?
17. Analyze thoughtfully Macbeth's speech beginning, "Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow." It is the finest in the play. Contrast this with the dagger speech in Act II, Scene I. Is it a greater or a lesser Macbeth who speaks now?

18. What incident in Scene V further shakes Macbeth's faith in the witches?
19. Note in Scene VI that it is Malcolm who directs the attack. You may be sure this was deliberate planning on Shakespeare's part. What effect does it have on the audience?
20. What effect does the encounter with young Siward have upon Macbeth?
21. Why do you think Shakespeare has Macduff and Macbeth narrowly miss each other in Scene VII?
22. Why will Macbeth not play "the Roman fool"?
23. What reason does Macbeth give for not wanting to fight Macduff?
24. Give two reasons why it is dramatically satisfying that Macduff should be the one to kill Macbeth.
25. What purpose does Malcolm's final speech serve? Does it leave us feeling more satisfied with the play?

2. Assignment

1. The reading of the play could profitably be followed by one or more class periods devoted to the discussion of the characters of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. Each is open to several interpretations.

One interpretation of Macbeth is that he was a weak character, though not fundamentally evil. It was the ruthless ambition of his wife, abetted by his superstitious belief in the prophecies of the witches, which pushed him into crime. Once begun, he lacked the will to call a halt. The other view holds that he was a strong and ambitious character. This interpretation is supported by indications in the play that he had planned to kill Duncan to gain the crown even before he met the witches. Before making up your own mind, reread Act I, Scenes III and VII.

One interpretation of Lady Macbeth finds support in Malcolm's description of her as a "fiend-like queen." According to this view she was a woman of ruthless ambition, who planned in cold blood to murder an innocent old man who was a guest in her home. The contrary interpretation is that she was more ambitious for her husband than for herself; that she forced herself to do a deed contrary to her nature. This view is supported by the remorse which eventually drove her to madness and suicide. Before making up your mind, reread her words in Act I, Scenes V and VII.

Glossary

KEY TO PRONUNCIATION

VOWELS: āge, alwāys, shāre, āctive, ārgue, ābout; ēqual, électric, ědge, lettēř; ĩdle, ĩdiot; ōpen, ōblige, ōrder, ōn, boil, shoōt, goōd, scout; ūnion, ūranium, ūrge, ūnder.

CONSONANTS: **bat**, cheer, **dig**, fact, **give**, have, joy, **keep**, late, **me**, note, sing, part, race, sack, short, tame, **them**, thin, **fix**ture, value, water, yard, zero.

a

Achilles (ā·kĭl'ēz). The hero of Homer's *Iliad*.

adjuration (ăj'ōō·rā'shŭn). An earnest appeal.

Æs Triplex (ēz trĭp'lĕx). Triple brass; hence, very sturdy. The title of an essay by Stevenson.

allegory (ăl'ĕ·gō'rĭ). A story which teaches a lesson through the use of symbolism.

anapestic (ăn·ă·pĕst'ĭk). A poetic measure consisting of two unaccented syllables followed by one accented syllable.

anathema (ă·năth'ĕ·mă). A curse.

annals (ăn'ălz). A record of events by years.

antithesis (ăn·tĭth'ĕ·sĭs). A contrast. A figure of speech emphasizing contrast by placing opposites together.

apparition (ăp'ă·rĭsh'ŭn). A ghost.

apropos (ăp'rō·pō'). Relevant or suitable.

Arcady (ăr'ká·dĭ). A poetic variation of Arcadia, a mountainous area of Greece.

Areopagitica (ăr'ĕ·ŏp'ă·jĭt'ĭ·ká). The title of Milton's essay on freedom of the press. The word is derived from Areopagus (ăr'ĕ·ŏp'ă gŭs), the high court of Athens.

Ayrshire (ăr'shĭr). A county in southwest Scotland.

b

Bacchus (băk'ŭs). The Greek god of wine.

barrow (băr'ō). A large mound of earth or stones. In England there are many of these, built by prehistoric people over their burial places.

Bede (bĕd). The Venerable Bede, 673-735.

bedizen (bĕ·dĭ'z'n). Dress gaudily.

Bedlam (bĕd'lăm). A famous London hospital for the insane; the full name is the Hospital of St. Mary of Bethlehem. Used without a capital letter the word has come to mean any scene of wild confusion.

Beelzebub (bĕ·ĕl'zĕ·bŭb). The Devil.

beguile (bĕ·gĭl'). To deceive, often by exerting charm.

beldame (bĕl'dăm). An old woman.

benison (bĕn'ĭ·z'n). Blessing.

Beowulf (bă'ō·woōlf). The hero and title of an eighth-century Anglo-Saxon narrative poem.

betimes (bĕ·tĭmz'). Early or speedily.

bivouac (bĭv'ōō·ăk). Camping out without tents or other shelter.

Boccaccio, Giovanni (bòk·kät'ché·ō, jō-vän'nē). Italian writer of the fourteenth century, most famous for his *Decameron*, a collection of 100 tales, which influenced Chaucer and others.

Bruges (brōōzh). A picturesque old city in Belgium.

c

cadence (kā'děns). A rhythmical movement.

Caedmon (kād'mūn). An Anglo-Saxon poet of the seventh century.

Camelot (kām'ē-lōt). King Arthur's legendary capital city.

candor (kān'dēr). Frankness.

caricature (kār'ī·kā·tūr). A drawing, cartoon, or word-sketch that exaggerates the peculiarities of a person or thing.

cashier (kāsh-ēr'). To dismiss from service.

Celtic (sēl'tīk or kēl'tīk). Relating to a nomadic people who invaded Britain perhaps as early as 2000 B.C. Their language and culture survive to some extent in Wales, Ireland, and the highlands of Scotland.

cenotaph (sēn'ō·tāf). A monument honoring a dead person buried elsewhere.

censorious (sēn·sō'rī·ūs). Very critical.

certes (sūr'tēz). Certainly.

Chaucer, Geoffrey (chō'sēr, jēf'rī). English poet of the fourteenth century.

chronicle (krōn'ī·k'l). To relate events in the order in which they happened.

classical (klās'ī·kāl). As applied to literature, classical means an emphasis on *form*, rather than content. Usually the work is modeled on similar types in Greek or Roman literature.

coalition (cō'ā·lish'ūn). A union or alliance for joint action.

confound (kōn·found'). To confuse or puzzle.

conjunction (kōn·jūngk'tūr). A coming together of events.

copse (kōps). A grove of small trees or bushes.

coxcomb (kōks'kōm'). A person who is vain or conceited without justification.

cynic (sīn'īk). One who believes that people are insincere and selfish.

d

dactylic (dāk·tīl'īk). A poetic measure consisting of one accented syllable followed by two unaccented syllables.

Dante (dān'tē). Italian poet, 1265–1321.

Darien (dār'ī·ēn'). The Isthmus of Panama was formerly called the Isthmus of Darien.

decry (dē·krī'). To condemn or discredit.

Defoe, Daniel (dē·fō'). English prose writer, 1659?–1731.

demarcation (dē'mär·kā'shūn). Boundary line.

demesne (dē·mān'). Land, or land and buildings, held in ownership.

Diamelen (dī·ā'mēl-ēn). A young woman character in Conrad's short story "The Lagoon."

diffuseness (dī·fūs'nēss). Spreading out; wordiness.

dissertation (dīs'ēr·tā'shūn). An essay or thesis.

dissever (dī·sēv'ēr). To separate.

dogmatist (dōg'mā·tīst). One who states opinions as though they were facts.

Donne, John (dūn). English poet, 1572–1631.

dramatic monologue (drā·māt'īk mōn'ō·lōg).

A poem in which the imaginary speaker relates a dramatic experience from his life.

Dumfries (dūm·frēs'). City in Dumfriesshire in the south of Scotland.

Dunsinane (dūn'sī·nān'). A hill in central Scotland, the scene of Macbeth's defeat in 1054.

e

eccentric (ēk·sēn'trīk). Out of the ordinary; differing from the customary standards.

ecclesiastic (ē·klē'zī·ās'tīk). Having to do with the church or the clergy.

edifice (ēd'ī·fis). A building, usually a large or impressive one.

eke (ēk). Also.

Elia (ē'lī·ā). The pen name of Charles Lamb.

ell (ēl). An old English measure equal to forty-five inches.

envisage (ēn·vīz'ij). See with the mind's eye.

epitaph (ěp'î-táf). A memorial inscription on a tomb, or one written as if for a tomb.

hermite (ěr'ě-mít). A hermit.

etymology (ět'î-möl'ô-jî). The study of word origins.

Evelyn, John (ěv'lin). English diarist, 1620-1706.

f

faggot (făg'üt). A bundle of sticks or twigs for fuel.

fain (fān). Gladly.

fealty (fě'ăl-tî). Loyalty, especially of a vassal to his lord.

firmament (fîr'mă-měnt). The arch of the heavens.

Fleance (flě'āns). The son of Banquo in *Macbeth*.

flux (flüks). Continuous change.

foible (foi'b'l). Weakness.

foreshadowing (fôr-shăd'ô-ing). Warning of something to come.

Forster, Edward Morgan (fôr'stēr). English novelist, 1879-.

foundling (found'ling). A baby left by its unknown parents to be found and cared for by someone else.

furze (fûrz). A prickly shrub with yellow flowers.

g

Gawain (gă'wān). A nephew of King Arthur.

Glamis (glă'mîs). A castle in the south of Scotland traditionally associated with *Macbeth*.

gregarious (grê-gâr'î-üs). Living in herds or groups.

Grendel (grěnd'đěl). The monster slain by *Beowulf*.

guerdon (gûr'dŭn). A reward.

Guinevere (gwîn'ě-vēr). King Arthur's queen.

h

hautboy (hă'boi). An oboe.

Hazlitt, William (hăz'lît). English essayist, 1778-1830.

Hecate (hěk'ă-tē). A goddess of the Underworld.

Heorot (hě'ô-rôt). Hrothgar's great hall in *Beowulf*.

hobble-dehoy (hăb'l-dē-hoi'). A youth between boyhood and manhood.

Hrothgar (hrôth'gär). The king of the Danes in *Beowulf*.

Hygelac (hîg'ě-läk). King of the Geats in *Beowulf*.

hyperbole (hî-pûr'bô-lē). A fanciful exaggeration intended to be taken figuratively.

i

iambic (î-ăm'bîk). A poetic measure consisting of one unaccented syllable followed by one accented syllable.

ignominy (îg'nô-mîn-î). Public shame or disgrace.

incongruous (în-kong'grô-üs). Not in harmony with its surroundings.

ingenuous (în-jěn'û-üs). Simple and natural; not sophisticated. Do not confuse with **ingenious** (în-jěn'yüs), which means "clever."

irony (î'rô-nî). An event that is contrary to what is expected. Also, a figure of speech in which the writer says the opposite of what he means.

j

Jacobean (jăk'ô-bē'ăn). Relating to James I of England, or, more loosely, to the early seventeenth century.

jocund (jök'ünd). Cheerful or merry.

joust (jüst). A combat on horseback between two knights with lances.

k

ken (kěn). Recognize.

l

L'Allegro (lä-lă'grô). The cheerful one. The title of a poem by Milton.

lay (lä). A song.

Lilliput (lil'f-püt). The imaginary country in which Gulliver finds himself after being shipwrecked.

Lilliputians (lil'f-pū'shāns). The tiny inhabitants of Lilliput in Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*.

m

madding (mäđ'ing). Raving or wild.

madrigal (mäđ'rí-gál). A song with parts for several voices, sung without accompaniment.

manor (män'ēr). The house of an estate, or sometimes the estate itself.

masque (másk). An amateur dramatic performance in which the actors wear elaborate costumes and masks. Usually costumes, scenery, music, and dancing are more important than the characters and plot.

Maugham, William Somerset (môm). English dramatist, novelist, and short-story writer, 1874-.

mead (mēđ). A drink made of fermented honey and water. Also, poetic for "meadow."

metaphor (mēt'á-fôr). A figure of speech which *implies* rather than states a comparison. "She was a phantom of delight."

metaphysical (mēt'á-fiz'í-kál). Beyond visible nature; highly abstract.

mock-heroic (mök'hē-rō'ík). A burlesque of a heroic style, character, or action.

Morte d'Arthur (môrt' dār'thēr). The Death of Arthur. The title of Sir Thomas Malory's prose romance based on the Arthurian legends.

mummers (müm'ērz). Actors, usually amateur, wearing costumes and masks and taking part in a pageant or play for a special occasion, such as Christmas.

n

Neville, Square (něv'1). The imaginary London setting of Maugham's short story "The Verger."

o

obsequious (ób-sē'kwí-ús). Excessively and falsely polite or humble.

Ozymandias (óz'í-măn'dí-ās). Title of a poem by Shelley.

p

Pamela (pām'ě-lá). The chief character of Richardson's novel of the same name.

pantomime (păn'tô-mím). A play without spoken words, the action being carried forward solely by gestures.

paradox (pär'á-döks). A statement which seems to be self-contradictory, yet on closer examination may prove to be true.

paragon (pär'á-gôn). A model of perfection.

parody (pär'ô-dí). A humorous imitation of a serious work.

pastoral (pás'tô-rál). Relating to country life; sometimes, specifically to shepherds.

Pepys, Samuel (pēps). English diarist, 1633-1703.

phantom (făn'tüm). An illusion. Also a representation of an ideal, as "a phantom of delight."

phlegmatic (flēg-măt'ík). Lacking in enthusiasm.

pibroch (pē'brök). A piece of warlike or mournful music played on the bagpipe, or such a song accompanied by the bagpipe.

piscator (pís-kā'tēr). A fisherman.

plague (pläg). An affliction, or a contagious disease.

poignant (poin'yánt). Emotionally moving or affecting.

preferment (prē-fûr'měnt). A promotion to a better position. The term is often used in relation to offices in the church.

presage (prēs'ij). *Noun*. An omen or foreshadowing of things to come.

presage (prē-sāj'). *Verb*. To make a prediction.

probity (prō'bí-tí). Honesty or uprightness.

procrastination (prô-krás'tí-nā'shūn). Delaying, or putting off.

prolific (prô-líf'ík). Producing abundantly.

Prospect (prôs'pí-sē). Look forward. The title of a poem by Browning.

protagonist (prō-tăg'ō-nĭst). The leading character in a piece of narrative literature. The character the reader wants to see succeed against his opponent, the antagonist.

prudence (prōō'dĕns). Good judgment in handling practical affairs.

pseudonym (sū'dō-nĭm). A fictitious name assumed by a writer to conceal his real name. Also, a pen name.

pun (pŭn). A play on words. The humor may depend upon a single word which has several meanings, or upon two different words which sound identical.

"The love that loves a scarlet coat
Should be more uniform!"

"They went and told the sexton, and
The sexton toll'd the bell."

—Thomas Hood

purvey (pŭr-vā'). Supply food.

q

quarter-staff (kwŏr'tēr-stāf). A stout pole about eight feet long formerly used as a weapon.

r

Raphael (răf'ă-ĕl). Italian painter, 1483-1520.

realistic (rē-ăl-ĭs'tĭk). As applied to literature, "realistic" means that a sense of fact is the predominant characteristic of the work. Realistic literature seeks to portray life without glamorizing or otherwise distorting it.

reddleman (rĕd'l-măn). One who mines redde, or red ochre, a form of iron ore used in paint.

Renaissance (rĕn'ĕ-zăns'). The transitional period in Europe between medieval and modern times. The Renaissance began in Italy in the fourteenth century but did not reach England until the sixteenth century.

rencounter (rĕn-kount'ēr). A casual meeting.

retribution (rĕt'rĭ-bŭ'shŭn). A deserved punishment.

romantic (rŏ-măn'tĭk). As applied to literature, "romantic" means that imagination is the most prominent characteristic of the work. The appeal of romantic literature is emotional rather than intellectual.

Rossetti, Dante Gabriel (rŏ-sĕt'ĭ). English painter and poet, 1828-1882.

rustic (rŭs'tĭk). Rural, or related to country life.

s

satire (săt'ĭr). A literary work which makes use of irony or sarcasm to ridicule human foolishness.

Scyldings (shĭld'ĭngs). Another name for the Danes in *Beowulf*.

second (sĕk'ŭnd). In a duel, the second is a friend selected by the challenger to arrange the preliminary details.

seneschal (sĕn'ĕ-shăl). The person in charge of the palace or estate of a king or a nobleman; also called "steward" or "bailiff."

Shelley, Percy Bysshe (shĕl'ĭ, bĭsh). English poet, 1792-1822.

simile (sĭm'ĭ-lĕ). A figure of speech comparing two unlike things, usually identifiable by the words *like* or *as*.

Siward (sŭ'ĕrd). Leader of the English army against Macbeth. His son, Young Siward, is killed in combat with Macbeth.

sophistical (sŏ-fis'tĭ-kăl). Based on unsound or false reasoning.

sophistry (sŏf'is-trĭ). Unsound or misleading reasoning.

Stoke Poges (stŏk pŏ'jĭs). A village in Buckinghamshire, the scene of Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard."

Strachey, Giles Lytton (stră'chĭ, jĭlz lĭt'ŭn). English biographer, 1880-1932.

syncope (sĭng'kŏ-pĕ). A contraction, as "e'er" for "ever."

t

Tara (tă'ră). The place of residence of the early Irish kings.

Tempe (tĕm'pĕ). A beautiful valley in Greece.

tetrameter (tě·trām'č·tēr). A line of poetry having four measures or feet.

Thames (tēmz). River which flows through London.

travesty (träv'ēs·tī). A parody or caricature; a treatment which makes something serious seem ridiculous.

trencher (trěn'chēr). A wooden platter on which food is served.

trochaic (trō·kā'īk). A poetic measure consisting of one accented syllable followed by one unaccented syllable.

Trollope, Anthony (trōl'ūp). English novelist, 1815–1882.

troubadour (trōō'bā·dōōr). A singer of love songs in eleventh- and twelfth-century France.

Tuan (tōō·än'). A Malayan term of respect used in addressing Europeans.

turnpike (tūrn'pīk). A toll road, or one on which toll was formerly charged.

u

usurer (ū'zhōō·rēr). A person who lends money at an excessive or unlawfully high rate of interest.

v

venator (vē·nā'tōr). A hunter.

verger (vūr'jēr). The custodian of a church.

vernacular (vēr·nāk'ū·lēr). The native or everyday language of any people.

verisimilitude (vēr'ī·sīm·īl'ī·tūd). The appearance of truth or reality.

viands (vī'ānds). Food.

vicar (vīk'ēr). The minister in an English parish.

vouchsafe (vouch·sāf'). To grant or bestow.

vulgar (vūl'gēr). Common; relating to common people.

w

weal (wēl). Well-being or prosperity.

Wealhtheow (wēl'thē·ō). Hrothgar's wife in *Beowulf*.

Wessex (wēs'ēks). The Saxon kingdom under Alfred, covering roughly what is now Hampshire, Berkshire, Wiltshire, and Dorsetshire. Hardy revived the old name for the scene of his novels.

wonted (wūn'tēd). Customary.

Worcestershire (wōōs'tēr·shīr). A county in west-central England.

x

Xanadu (zān'ā·dōō). A city in Coleridge's poem "Kubla Khan."

y

Yeats, William Butler (yāts). Irish poet, 1865–1939.

ycleped (ī·klēpt'). Called or named.

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